

Press release: Charity regulator removes two trustees for serious breaches of charity law

The founding trustees of a Birmingham based charity have been disqualified by the Charity Commission, following their removal, after an investigation found them responsible for misconduct and mismanagement.

In a [report published today](#), the charity regulator sets out the findings and conclusions of its statutory inquiry into [The Suyuti Institute](#), whose purposes include advancing the Islamic faith.

The Commission's investigation finds that the founding trustees had transferred liability for repaying the mortgage on a property owned by the wife of one of the trustees to the charity. The regulator concludes that these actions were not taken in line with the requirements of charity law and resulted in significant private benefit to one of the trustees.

The decision was taken when the charity accepted the transfer of assets and liabilities from a private trust connected to the mother of one of the trustees. That trust owned a plot of land in Manchester, on which an old cinema building had once stood, but was also responsible for repaying the mortgage on a property owned by the same trustee's wife.

The cinema building in question had been demolished several years prior to the charity accepting the transfer.

Both founding trustees are qualified solicitors and the inquiry concluded that it was reasonable to expect that they would have understood their legal duties and responsibilities as trustees when considering whether to accept the assets and liabilities of the private trust.

The Commission used its legal powers to suspend and then remove the two individuals as trustees of the charity, which means they are disqualified from being trustees, or from holding senior management functions in any charity in England and Wales.

Michelle Russell, Director of Investigations, Monitoring and Enforcement at the Charity Commission said:

The public rightly expect those running charities to live up to the highest standards of behaviour and attitude. That includes demonstrating scrupulous financial probity and being able to show that all decisions are made in the best interests of the charity and its beneficiaries.

The two founding trustees of this charity failed to fulfill those

expectations and were responsible for serious breaches of their charity law duties, which is why we removed them.

The regulator has since been monitoring the work undertaken by the charity's newly appointed trustees, who have secured repayment from the former trustee for funds he owed to the charity, implemented new financial controls and who are now producing a strategy for the charity's future, having put its activities on hold during the investigation.

Michelle Russell added:

The Commission's purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust, and I am pleased that, working with us, the new trustees have returned the charity to a firmer legal footing and are considering its future activities.

The Charity Commission is the regulator and registrar of charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to [ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that charities can improve lives and strengthen society](#).

The inquiry opened in January 2017 and concluded on 19 March 2019, with the publication of the inquiry report. The full inquiry report is available on gov.uk.

The Suyuti Institute was registered as a charity in April 2013.

ENDS

Notes to editors

[**Press release: Brokenshire: hundreds of thousands of families helped to change their lives for the better**](#)

A programme supporting families with complex problems has reduced the proportion of children going into care, adults claiming Jobseeker's Allowance and juvenile convictions, Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP has today (19 March 2019) confirmed.

Evidence from the National Evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme shows that the scheme has improved outcomes for families and helped reform local services.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP commended the positive effect the programme is having in communities across the country by working with whole families to provide additional stability, practical support and help them overcome complicated issues including 'worklessness', uncontrolled debt and truancy.

When compared to a similar control group, the programme of targeted intervention was found to have:

- reduced the proportion of children on the programme going into care by a third
- reduced the proportion of adults on the programme going to prison by a quarter and juvenile convictions by 15%
- supported more people on the programme back in work with 10% fewer people claiming Jobseekers Allowance

Speaking at the Centre for Social Justice, Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

We all need support and commitment to achieve our full potential. We're all the product of other people's kindness. That starts with stronger families – as the cornerstone of stronger communities – and this is the driving spirit of the Troubled Families programme.

Fresh thinking is needed now more than ever to meet the challenges we face – like knife crime and gang culture. This programme is proving it has a valuable role to play as we look forwards to the upcoming Spending Review.

It's inspiring to see agencies working better together to help people succeed but the real story is the thousands of people who've taken control of their own lives. People are being helped to help themselves.

The Troubled Families Programme supports families with complex, interconnected problems such as anti-social behaviour, mental health problems or domestic violence.

Rather than responding to each problem, or single family member separately, assigned Troubled Families keyworkers engage with the whole family. Through this approach they coordinate support from a range of services to identify and address family issues as early as possible rather than merely reacting to crises.

Dame Louise Casey said:

Since 2012, the first and current Troubled Families Programmes have – very deliberately – shaken up the way families with complex problems are supported, ensuring they are identified earlier to get the help they need, which is completely focused on helping families

live better lives.

Helping families to help themselves so their kids are not taken into care or family members ending up in prison and getting more people from the programme into work is testament to what frontline staff can do with the right resources and backing.

This evaluation shows it was absolutely right to have invested so much in this approach since 2012.

Last month, a £9.5 million fund was also made available within the existing Troubled Families Programme, which will focus on supporting children and families vulnerable to knife crime and gang culture – with a further £300,000 available to train frontline staff on how to tackle childhood trauma. The money has gone to community-backed projects in 21 areas across England.

Since the current programme began in 2015, local authorities and their partners have worked with over 400,000 eligible families. This compares with only 2,000 families who had received whole family support in England between January 2006 and March 2010.

In addition to supporting families struggling with a variety of issues in their lives, the report outlines how the programme is helping develop long-term change across local services including police, schools, social care and Jobcentres.

Services and professionals are now better connected and working in partnership. Rather than circling around families with multiple and separate assessments and appointments, local authorities are using the programme to work across organisational and cultural boundaries to achieve better lives for the families in need.

The Secretary of State is committed to improving the programme further, including asking whether Troubled Families is the best name and whether it should be changed to better reflect its positive and supportive ethos and to deepen the engagement for the work.

Read the [national evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme 2015 to 2020 report](#).

This is the fourth evaluation update and it brings together findings from the latest analysis of national and local datasets, a cost benefit analysis, case study research and staff survey research.

Find more information on the £9.8 million [Supporting Families Against Youth Crime fund](#).

The current Troubled Families Programme was rolled out in England in April 2015 and replaced the first programme which had been in place since 2012. The programme will continue support for disadvantaged families with complex problems and aims to achieve significant and sustained progress with up to 400,000 families by 2020.

The National Evaluation confirms that the programme continues to reach families with complex and multiple problems. In the year before starting the programme, families on the programme had the following characteristics compared to the general population:

- children were over 9 times more likely to be classified as a Child in Need
- adults were over 9 times more likely to have a caution or conviction
- adults were 5 times more likely to be claiming benefits
- children were nearly 3 times more likely to be persistently absent from school

In addition:

- over two fifths of troubled families had a family member with a mental health issue
- just over a fifth of troubled families had a family member affected by an incident of domestic abuse or violence

[Press release: UK sees record employment as unemployment falls below 4 per cent](#)

The UK's record jobs market continued into 2019 with 473,000 more people in work in January compared to a year ago, while the UK's employment rate reached an all-time high of 76.1%.

New figures show that wages continued to outstrip inflation for 12 months in a row.

Minister of State for Employment Alok Sharma welcomed the figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), which also showed unemployment falling below 4% for the first time since the mid-1970's.

Companies are driving the growth, with private sector employment up by 3.8 million since 2010. The figures also revealed a higher rate of women in work than ever before.

Minister of State for Employment Alok Sharma said:

Today's employment figures are further evidence of the strong economy the Chancellor detailed in last week's spring statement, showing how our pro-business policies are delivering record

employment.

2019 has continued to be a record breaker, with the employment rate topping 76% for the first time, record female employment and unemployment falling below 4% for the first time in 44 years.

Our jobs market remains resilient as we see more people than ever before benefitting from earning a wage. By backing the government's Brexit deal and giving certainty to business, MPs have the chance to safeguard this jobs track record.

The government is helping even more people benefit from a well-paid job by:

- backing businesses to create good jobs with our modern Industrial Strategy, while ensuring they play by the rules, so we are closing tax loopholes, strengthening workers' rights, and tightening the rules big businesses must follow
- investing in the infrastructure, training and apprenticeships we need for our future, with public investment at the highest sustained level in 40 years
- introducing Universal Credit which is helping people move into work faster and stay in it longer, while recent Budget measures mean 2.4 million families will keep up to an extra £630 per year of what they earn
- helping people stay in work longer with our [Fuller Working Lives strategy](#), which supports employers to recruit, re-train and retain older workers
- tackling inequalities in employment highlighted by the [Race Disparity Audit](#), through targeted support in 20 areas around the country and £90 million announced by the Prime Minister to help young people.

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News story: Update on veterinary medicine supply in a no deal EU Exit

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) has today (19 March) set out detail on the preparations underway to ensure a continued supply of veterinary medicines in a no deal scenario.

Leaving the EU with a deal remains the government's top priority. This has not changed. However, a responsible government must plan for every eventuality, including a no deal scenario.

The VMD and the pharmaceutical industry already have well-established procedures to deal with medicine shortages, working closely with those operating in the supply chain to ensure that risks are minimised when they do arise.

The government has also put in place a multi-layered approach to support the industry to reduce any supply disruption in veterinary medicines. These plans include:

- Securing additional space for veterinary medicines on government-procured ferries. This gives suppliers the option to use alternative ferry routes avoiding the Dover-Calais (short strait) crossing where there is potential risk of significant disruption. This additional space has been secured as veterinary medicines have been classed as [critical goods](#), essential for the preservation of animal welfare.
- Minimising changes to, or providing clarifications of, regulatory requirements so companies can continue to sell their products in the UK in a no deal scenario.
- Strengthening the established processes and resources used to deal with shortages in the event that they do occur. This includes extending the VMD's industry supply reporting system in order to understand the reasons for potential supply issues and take appropriate action.
- Permitting the use of medicines authorised in other countries which can be imported through the VMD's Special Import scheme.

Working with the VMD, trade bodies and animal health companies have also already been carrying out contingency planning. These include maintaining sensible levels of stock in the UK and changing supply routes

[Press release: Wiltshire waste dealer forced to pay back £200,000](#)

Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been confiscated from a Wiltshire man who ran an illegal waste operation leading to a serious fire at one of his yards.

Lee Averies is serving a five-year ban from the waste industry after environmental offences at sites in Swindon he operated with his brother, David Averies, and another one in Calne. The yard at Marshgate in the town suffered a significant blaze in 2014.

At Swindon Crown Court on Monday, the Environment Agency recovered £200,000 for the taxpayer from Lee Averies under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. He could face prison if he doesn't pay up within three months.

Judge Jason Taylor QC ordered Averies, 49, of The Marsh, in Wanborough, to pay a contribution of £15,000 towards the Environment Agency's legal and investigation costs. His company, Calne Aggregates Holdings Ltd, currently in liquidation, was given a nominal penalty of £1.

The court had frozen seven personal and business bank accounts linked to the waste dealer at an earlier hearing, after an application by the Environment Agency.

Colin Chiverton, Environment Manager for the Environment Agency in Wiltshire, said:

The Environment Agency will do everything in its power to prevent waste crime and punish those who profit from it.

Our extensive investigation found companies linked to Lee Averies earned significant amounts of money from stockpiling waste, and failing to exercise proper controls over the sites. He benefitted personally.

We have ensured neither Averies nor his businesses operate any permitted waste sites, or become registered waste-carriers, such as providing skips for hire. Averies remains subject to a five-year criminal behaviour order, preventing him from any involvement in the waste business until 2021.

In the past four years, Environment Agency officers have worked with other agencies like the Insolvency Service and the Traffic Commissioner, which oversees HGV licences, to investigate other offences.

David Averies was fined and ordered to pay £50,000 in costs by the court in 2016.

The Environment Agency encourages anyone needing waste removed to only use companies listed on its [waste removal register](#)