

[Foreign Secretary statement on CPS charging decision](#)



Following today's charging decision by the Crown Prosecution Service in the case of Harry Dunn, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

I welcome the taking of a charging decision which is an important step towards justice for Harry and towards solace for his family, but it is not the end.

I hope that Anne Sacoolas will now realise the right thing to do is to come back to the UK and cooperate with the criminal justice process.

Further information

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[Civil/crime news: updated guidance on removable media available](#)

New guidance available on GOV.UK explains the legal requirement to only send encrypted removable media in support of applications and bills.

Why are you telling us this now?

We want to remind you about:

How does this affect provider work?

Providers should avoid submitting removable media in an unencrypted state. If we receive unencrypted items, we will still process the information contained on the removable media.

But we are not able to take the risk of data loss by returning unencrypted media either through the post or by DX.

We would like providers to take the same approach and avoid sending unencrypted media in the first place.

What happens to unencrypted items?

If you send unencrypted removable media to the LAA it is your responsibility to arrange for it to be returned securely. If arrangements are not made the LAA will destroy the item after 28 days.

Why do you take this approach?

We need to ensure compliance with data protection legislation and support providers in meeting their obligations. Our guidance explains how to do this when working with the LAA.

Is this a new policy?

The new guidance document puts the spotlight on removable media. However, our approach has already been set out in data security guidance uploaded in 2018.

This followed enactment of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

Looking ahead

We are currently testing two suppliers to trial alternatives to sharing data by removable media and reliance on sending USBs and CDs. Further updates will follow in 2020.

Further information

[Data security requirements](#) – for new guidance on removable media and 2018 guidance on personal data and documents

[New funding scheme supports purchase](#)

of life-saving safety equipment for fishermen



The new UK-wide funding scheme, which is being delivered by Seafish in co-operation with the MCA and Trinity House, is open to owners of active UK registered commercial fishing vessels who have not previously received support to purchase PLBs from elsewhere. It allows them to claim a reimbursement of £200 on the cost of each item purchased for their crew – potentially covering up to 50% of the cost of this life-saving equipment.

The financial backing for the scheme is being provided from the UK government's new £1m fund to improve safety in the fishing industry, which was announced by Maritime Minister Nusrat Ghani at the Department for Transport in July 2019.

[For further details and information on how to apply](#)

Contact the Project Administrator on 01472 252302 or training@seafish.co.uk.)

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Provisional local government finance settlement 2020 to 2021: statement

Introduction

Today I have published the provisional local government finance settlement for 2020-21.

The proposals set out in this consultation will give local authorities a 4.4% real-terms increase in their Core Spending Power, which will rise from £46.2 billion in 2019-20 to £49.1 billion in 2020-21.

It is a strong and well-balanced package, that delivers significant extra resources to the priority areas of adult and children's social care, while offering protection to other key service areas.

In October of this year we launched a technical consultation, within which we invited views on the proposed package for 2020-21.

I would like to thank colleagues in local government for their responses to the October consultation and thank them in advance for comments on this next consultation.

I have taken the responses to the technical consultation into account and, following this, I am now publishing our proposals for the [provisional local government finance settlement for 2020-21](#).

We recognise the importance of addressing the challenges in our social care system. This is why we want to build the same level of cross-party consensus on social care as we have with the NHS, to make far-reaching changes to the way these services are financed and delivered.

In the meantime, we will do all we can to support local authorities. The proposals I have published today will allow local authorities to access an additional £1.5 billion for social care.

This comprises £1 billion of additional grant – for both adult and children's social care – and a proposed 2% council tax precept for adult social care, which will enable councils to access a further £500 million.

£150 million of the additional grant will be used to equalise the distributional impact of the council tax adult social care precept.

These additional resources sit on top of the existing social care package, which will continue at 2019-20 levels, and mean that local authorities will have access to over £5.5 billion of dedicated funding across adult and children's social care in 2020-21.

Core settlement resources

The provisional settlement also provides protection for vital services by increasing core settlement resources, which includes Revenue Support Grant and business rates baseline funding levels, in line with inflation; and by continuing other key grants from 2019-20.

Council tax

The proposed referendum principles strike a balance between giving local authorities the flexibility to address service pressures, without overburdening council tax payers with excessive increases.

Local authorities will therefore be able to increase council tax in 2020-21 by a core principle of up to 2%, without holding a local referendum. Shire district councils will have a bespoke council tax referendum principle of 2%

or £5, whichever is higher.

In addition, councils with adult social care responsibilities will be able to increase their council tax by a further 2%, on top of the core principle, to be spent exclusively on adult social care.

If confirmed, this package will mean that the expected average council tax increase for 2020-21 will be the lowest since 2016-17.

New Homes Bonus

To reward local authorities for house building in their area, I can confirm that we will make a new round of allocations of the New Homes Bonus for 2020-21 amounting to £907 million.

As part of this, I am committing an additional £7 million to maintain the growth baseline for payments at 0.4%.

We will make no legacy payments on these new allocations, but the government will make legacy payments on allocations made in earlier years which are due to be paid in 2020-21.

It is not clear that the New Homes Bonus in its current form is focussed on incentivising homes where they are needed most. I am therefore announcing that the government will consult on the future of the housing incentive in the spring.

This will include moving to a new, more targeted approach that rewards local authorities where they are ambitious in delivering the homes we need, and which is aligned with other measures around planning performance.

Rural Services Delivery Grant

We will continue to recognise the extra costs of delivering services in rural areas and propose to maintain last year's Rural Services Delivery Grant of £81 million, which is the joint-highest paid to date.

It will be distributed using the same methodology as 2019-20, which allocated funding to the top quartile of local authorities on the 'super-sparsity' indicator.

Independent Living Fund and Schools

Following the closure of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) in June 2015, the government agreed to continue funding pre-existing ILF arrangements until the end of 2019-20, through the Former ILF Recipient Grant.

We can confirm that the Former ILF Recipient Grant will continue to be paid to local authorities in 2020-21.

The total value of the grant in 2020-21 will be maintained at the 2019-20 value of £160.6 million, with the same approach to individual local authority

allocations. Details will be published shortly.

We recognise that the settlement is just one source of funding that local authorities need to know about. Government has now also confirmed Dedicated Schools Grant allocations for 2020-21.

Conclusion

Local government has asked us for certainty and stability in the settlement for 2020-21.

This provisional settlement delivers on this, building on Spending Round 2019 and our recent technical consultation.

It provides certainty for 2020-21 to those planning vital front-line services and provides significant extra resources where they are needed most.

Biggest multi-billion pound spending increase for councils in a decade

- Local Government Secretary confirms £49.1 billion package of funding for essential services
- Funding represents an increase of almost £3 billion in core spending power for local authorities in England
- Spending boost includes an extra £1.5 billion for social care

Local authorities across England will receive a share of £49.1 billion local government funding for the coming financial year to help them deliver essential services for local communities, including an extra £1.5 billion for social care.

The funding plans provide certainty for councils and represent the biggest year-on-year real terms increase in spending power in a decade.

Measures set out by Local Government Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP today (20 December 2019), will support and reward local growth, protect the most vulnerable in society and secure value for money for the taxpayer.

Local Government Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

This £49.1 billion settlement delivers the biggest real-terms increase in spending power for a decade and a £1.5 billion boost for social care.

This government is committed to unleashing the huge potential of

this country, and we are giving communities the funding that they need to thrive, support the most vulnerable in our society and also protect the vital services that we all rely on.

The provisional financial settlement includes:

More funding for social care

The provisional settlement makes £1.5 billion of new funding available for adult and children's social care, supporting local authorities to meet rising demand, fund more care home places and social workers and protect the most vulnerable in society.

This includes £1 billion of new grant funding, a continuation of all existing social care grants, and the ability for authorities to raise up to £500 million more for adult social care, where needed.

In total, local authorities will have access to over £5.5 billion of dedicated funding across adult and children's social care in 2020 to 2021.

Protection for core funding

Core funding will be protected in 2020 to 2021, conserving vital, core services which residents rely on. The provisional settlement proposes that settlement core funding is increased in line with inflation, and any Negative Revenue Support Grant is directly eliminated.

Rewards for building new homes

The government has committed £907 million to continue the New Homes Bonus scheme in 2020 to 2021. The scheme financially rewards local authorities for the number of new homes they build locally, incentivising housing growth and creating homes for local residents.

Preventing excessive Council Tax rises

Local residents will have the power to veto excessive Council Tax rises, with a referendum being required if local authorities propose raising the tax above 2%, with extra flexibility for some authority types.

Mayoral Combined Authorities and town and parish councils will be exempt from the rule, and local authorities with responsibility for adult social care will be able to set a further 2% increase, ringfenced exclusively for adult social care. This strikes the right balance between addressing pressure on services and protecting Council Tax payers from excessive bill hikes.

Support for rural areas

The government is committed to ensuring the unique needs of rural areas are met, and so will maintain last year's Rural Services Delivery Grant at £81 million, matching the highest rural grant paid to date.

This relates to England only.

The government will provide final confirmation at the final local government finance settlement in the new year.

On 4 September 2019 the government set out the results of the 2019 Spending Round, providing access to a rise from £46.2 billion to £49.1 billion in 2020 to 2021, an increase of £2.9 billion or an estimated 4.4% real-terms increase.

The additional £1.5 billion for adult and children's social care is broken down as: £1 billion of funding for child and adult social care and a further £500 million through the adult social care precept. The £1 billion grant includes £150 million to equalise the impact of the precept.