

Press release: Independent Recovery Taskforce for Kensington and Chelsea council

Communities Secretary, Sajid Javid, has today (5 July 2017) announced that he is putting in place an independent Recovery Taskforce to help the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) deal with the longer term recovery of the Grenfell Tower fire.

This follows the government's commitment to do all that it can to support those who have been affected by the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower.

Communities Secretary, Sajid Javid said:

The scale of the recovery effort needed on the Lancaster West estate in the months to come cannot be underestimated. Support to survivors, the families and friends of those who lost their lives and residents in the wider community must and will be ongoing. The challenge of providing that support is and will continue to be significant. I want to help the council meet that challenge.

The immediate response to the disaster is being coordinated by the Grenfell Response Team, headed up by John Barradell. He is ably supported by a number of colleagues drawn from London councils, the wider local government sector including the RBKC, the voluntary sector, police, health and fire services as well as central government. Their expertise and hard work is making a huge difference.

As well as providing that immediate support, we must have an eye to the future. This intervention is putting in place the foundations that will support the longer term recovery.

Councillor Elizabeth Campbell, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea said:

We have a lot of very dedicated council staff working to provide help and support to those affected by the Grenfell Tower fire.

But the unprecedented scale of this incident makes it impossible for one organisation to cope on its own.

That's why my first action as leader was to ask DCLG for help, and I'm delighted they have been so swift to respond.

I look forward to working with their staff as we all concentrate our efforts on healing the wounds in the north of our borough and

to regain the trust of a community traumatised by disaster.

Further information and details of who will be a part of this taskforce will be announced within the following few weeks.

The full written ministerial statement will be made available during the day (5 July 2017) on Parliament.UK and a link to it will be added here.

[News story: CMA to introduce market investigation changes](#)

Market investigations are powerful tools that can bring in major changes to make markets work better for consumers and businesses.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) committed, in its Annual Plan, to review the way it conducts them. It took account of experience since market investigations were introduced in the Enterprise Act 2002, as well as legislative changes that came into force in 2014, reducing their time limit from 2 years to 18 months.

Andrea Coscelli, CMA Acting Chief Executive, said:

We believe these changes will enable us to carry out our market investigations more quickly, without reducing their effectiveness. They will preserve a fair and robust process and independence of decision-making throughout, which is central to the regime.

Having considered comments received, we remain convinced that earlier discussion of potential remedies will allow a fuller discussion with all parties involved and bring real benefits in ensuring the most effective measures possible to make markets work better for consumers and businesses.

[Having consulted on these proposals during March to May](#), the CMA is making the following changes to streamline its existing processes and ensure it meets the shorter statutory timescale:

- Assessing potential remedies to improve the market at an earlier stage in the investigation – following consultation it has clarified various aspects, in particular that updated thinking on potential remedies could be included in working papers (as suggested by some respondents) and that in most cases the CMA is unlikely to start detailed work designing potential remedies at an early stage, but our approach will be tailored depending on the specifics of the case.

- Reducing the number of formal publication and consultation stages – removing the Updated Issues Statement, and combining provisional findings and provisional remedies into a single Provisional Decision Report.
- Earlier interaction with stakeholders during the investigation, including holding hearings sooner in the process.
- Allowing market studies (a shorter look at the market which can precede market investigations) to carry out preparatory work when they are likely to lead to a full investigation.
- Introducing the option for the CMA board to give an advisory steer on the scope of the market investigation, which is run by an independent group of CMA panel members.

The document responding to the comments received and the resulting changes in the CMA's published guidance, are available on the [consultation page](#).

[News story: #CultureisDigital – have your say](#)

Join the conversation on how culture and digital technology can work better together.

#CultureisDigital is a conversation between Government, the cultural sector and tech companies, led by DCMS. It stems from our commitment in the [Culture White Paper](#) to review the digitisation of our public collections and enhance online cultural experiences.

The project looks at how culture and digital technology can work together to drive audience engagement, unleash the creative potential and boost the capability of cultural organisations.

[Watch John Glen introduce the #CultureisDigital online discussion](#)

If you're part of a big or small organisation, in the tech or cultural sector, or someone driving forward ideas and initiatives in these areas, you can join the conversation now, discussing the issues you face and sharing your ideas and solutions to 4 main challenges:

Have your say at cultureisdigital.uk and follow the conversation on social media using the [#CultureisDigital hashtag](#). You can also share your case studies and examples of work already being delivered in this area.

[Press release: UK Government awards £1.4million to South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner to tackle violence against women and girls](#)

A South Wales project will receive a share of a £17million UK Government fund to help prevent and address violence against women and girls.

The UK Government has today announced that it will award £1.4million to the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner for their Violence Against Women and Girls in South Wales Programme.

The grant is awarded through the UK Government's Violence Against Women and Girls Service Transformation Fund. It is designed to promote projects which are leading the way in stopping violence before it happens, preventing abusive behaviour from becoming entrenched, and establishing the best ways to help victims and their families.

In South Wales, £1.4 million will go to a wide-ranging programme of support using the 'Change that Lasts' framework. This includes rolling out the 'Ask Me' scheme through which up to 30 'community ambassadors' will be trained to identify the signs of abuse and to provide safe spaces within communities where women can report it.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

Ending violence against women and girls is a priority for the UK Government.

Everyone has a right to live in safety and without fear and this UK Government funding for the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner will provide victims with immediate support to ensure they can feel safe and secure.

I am proud of what the UK Government has achieved so far to tackle violence against women. But it is a complex problem that we are unable to solve alone. That is why we are sending a clear message to local agencies – including police and local authorities – that tackling violence against women and girls should be a priority for them too.

By working together and confronting these vile crimes we will find ways to beat them. I am determined to see a future where no woman or girl need live in fear. The Violence against Women and Girls Transformation Fund brings us one step closer to reaching that destination.

As part of the early intervention work and to break the cycle of violence, the UK Government is working with local authorities on changing the attitudes and behaviours of perpetrators, to make sure rehabilitation, mental health interventions and other appropriate perpetrator programmes are in place.

The funding for successful bids was announced today in a speech by the Home Secretary to the Women's Aid conference to members in Coventry.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

Tackling violence against women and girls is 'everyone's business'. It needs a joined-up, collaborative response locally, providing support to victims through health, education and social care, as well as the police.

These projects will help ensure that victims and survivors get the right support at the right time, as well as intervening early to prevent these crimes from happening in the first place.

Violence Against Women and Girls devastates the lives of victims and families and this Government will continue to do all it can to protect people from these horrendous crimes.

Today's announcement represents a further demonstration of the UK Government's commitment to tackling violence against women and girls and follows confirmation in the recent Queen's Speech of the forthcoming Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill.

It will include a consolidated new domestic abuse civil prevention and protection order, and enshrine a definition of domestic abuse in law. It will establish a Domestic Violence and Abuse Commissioner to stand up for victims and survivors.

The legislation will allow the Government to ratify the Istanbul Convention, which will enable UK courts to prosecute British citizens for domestic abuse regardless of where in the world the offence was committed.

The Bill will also ensure that if abusive behaviour involves a child, then the court can hand down a sentence which reflects the devastating and life-long impact that abuse can have.

In the last Parliament, the UK Government published its strategy to end violence against women and girls, making clear that everyone needs to play their part – friends, family, employers, health providers and the police. It also introduced a specific offence of controlling or coercive behaviour.

Notes to editors

- The VAWG Strategy, published in March 2016, committed to launching a VAWG Service Transformation Fund as part of the £80million pledged to support the Government's commitment to tackling VAWG and ensuring

victims and survivors get the support they need. Following an additional £20million announced in the Spring Budget, we have now pledged £100million in funding over the Spending Review period.

[News story: Scottish economy returning to growth](#)

Responding to the Scottish GDP figures published today, which show 0.8 per cent growth in the Scottish Economy in 2017's first quarter, the Secretary of State for Scotland, David Mundell said:

These are very encouraging figures. The Scottish economy is returning to growth and I am pleased to see that the manufacturing sector in particular is making the most of export opportunities.

But, over the year, Scotland has continued to lag behind the UK as a whole – so there is still a lot of work to do.

The Scottish Government has extensive powers at their disposal to grow and support the economy and these figures underline the need for our two governments to work together as we prepare to leave the EU.

Brexit will bring new opportunities. We need to ensure Scottish business can take full advantage.

The UK Government is taking concerted action to build a strong economy across all parts of the UK. This includes work on our modern Industrial Strategy, City Deals and supporting businesses beyond the UK market to reach markets around the world through our global network of embassy-based trade experts.

The Scottish Government have the powers to support the country's economy, including powers over economic development, taxation, skills, as well as additional borrowing powers to allow them to invest where Scotland needs it.

The Scottish Government should be using these to grow the economy alongside the UK, rather than creating huge business uncertainty with the threat of another independence referendum.

Over the past year the UK Government has added over £1 billion to the Scottish Government's Budget through extra Barnett consequential. There was an extra £820m in the 2016 Autumn Statement and a further £350m in the 2017 Spring Budget.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) is working to promote shared UK

prosperity by financing international trade and investment, and championing free trade across the world.

DIT has worked with Scottish Development International and Highlands & Islands Enterprise on two Exporting is Great tours of Scotland. We will continue to work together helping companies to potentially expand from London into Scotland and across the United Kingdom.

In 2015/16 Scotland benefitted from 108 new Foreign Direct Investment projects, creating 4,178 jobs.

The UK Government has loaned start-up companies in Scotland millions to help businesses.