

# PM call with Prime Minister Modi of India: 22 March 2022

Press release

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The leaders discussed the grave situation in Ukraine, and the Prime Minister said he believed the actions of Putin's regime were deeply disturbing and disastrous for the world.

The pair agreed that Ukraine's integrity and territorial sovereignty must be respected.

Russia needed to adhere to the UN Charter, the leaders said, and both agreed that respect for international law was the only way to ensure global peace and prosperity.

Prime Minister Modi updated on India's support for the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, and the Prime Minister said the UK and India should intensify efforts to promote peace and de-escalation in the region.

The leaders welcomed India and the UK's strong and prosperous relationship, and agreed to continue to build on trade, security and business ties in the coming weeks and months. They looked forward to meeting in person at the earliest opportunity.

Published 22 March 2022

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# Reforms to pet microchipping regulations in England set out

Press release

Consultation launched on microchipping regulations follow the Pet Theft Taskforce recommendations



Image credit: Pixabay

- Changes to database system follow recommendations of the Pet Theft Taskforce
- New requirements will apply to both cats and dogs
- Improvements will make it easier to reunite lost or stolen pets with their owners

New proposals to make it easier to reunite lost or stolen cats and dogs with their owners were set out by the Government today.

An [eight-week consultation](#) will seek views on improvements to the pet microchipping database system, including faster access for approved users and regular reminders for keeping records updated which will help improve breeder traceability.

The recommendations follow last year's [Pet Theft Taskforce report](#), which highlighted the need to improve navigation of the database system and the transfer of keepership records.

The consultation seeks views on new requirements for registering additional details and a single point of access so microchip records can quickly be accessed by approved users to help identify the owners and keepers of pets. The transferring of keepership records will also be strengthened to prevent lost or stolen animals being re-registered without the keeper being aware, and to stop the creation of duplicate records.

The proposals aim to improve breeder traceability by making it compulsory for the breeder's details to remain on the database for the lifetime of the

animal – even when the animal changes keeper or when the microchip record is transferred to another database.

**Animal Welfare Minister Lord Goldsmith said:**

Pets are much loved members of the family, and microchipping is the best way of making sure owners can be reunited if their pet is ever sadly lost or stolen.

We have reviewed the current regulations and the Pet Theft Taskforce's recommendations, and it is clear improvements are needed to better protect the welfare of our nation's pets. These proposals will create a more effective system to better animal welfare and deter pet theft.

**David Bowles, Head of Public Affairs at the RSPCA, said:**

We are pleased to see Defra launching a consultation into improvements to the microchipping database system. We'd support the introduction of a single, centralised database of microchipped cats and dogs or would love to see better collaboration and communication between the current 16 separate databases.

This would make it much easier to quickly reunite stray, missing and stolen pets with their owners and would also save a lot of time for charities, such as the RSPCA, local authorities and vets when they're trying to trace an owner.

**Justine Shotton, British Veterinary Association President, said:**

We're delighted that the Government is gathering views on how to make the microchipping system fit for purpose. We strongly recommend microchipping as a safe, effective and permanent way to identify individual animals, but the sheer number of databases and the fact that they don't routinely communicate with each other currently present significant barriers to successful reunification of lost pets and owners.

Streamlining the system into a single point of entry and driving up standards across all databases would help to spare heartache for many pet owners and start things on a positive footing when compulsory cat microchipping is rolled out next year.

The changes will also apply to cats after 99% of people supported a proposal to introduce [compulsory cat microchipping](#) in a recent consultation. Cat microchip records will be stored on the existing database system and benefit

from the new improvements.

Published 22 March 2022

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## [2022 Sanctuary Award winner announced](#)

Celebrating their 30th anniversary this year, the Sanctuary Awards are organised by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and aim to showcase sustainability efforts across Defence, both in the UK and overseas.

Nigel Linge has won this year's prestigious Silver Otter trophy. This award is for the best conservation group-led project or individual conservation effort on the MOD estate. Nigel has worked on the balance of military training requirements with public access provision across Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) for 15 years. Since his retirement from the MOD in 2014, he continues to work tirelessly to devise and support new plans to improve access management.

The Sustainable Business Award is presented to the best commercial project which delivers sustainable solutions for the Armed Forces to live, work or train. It was won by Op CORDED with special commendation to deployment 7, the 1st Battalion Irish Guards. Op CORDED support rangers in their fight to counter the illegal wildlife trade efforts in sub-Saharan Africa, deploying infantry, military medics and military police to provide training and partner patrolling.

Elephant in Kefue National Park, part of the anti-poaching work of Op CORDED. Copyright: British Army.

Op CORDED showcases how the unique skills of the British Army can be deployed to solve a wide range of problems, and the operation forms a core pillar of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' response to the growing environmental security.

Defence Procurement Minister Jeremy Quin said:

Defence procurement and the Defence Estate offer significant opportunities to support net zero and biodiversity: embedding a culture of sustainability while meeting essential Defence outputs. We are proud of the innovative ideas being generated to drive change.

I send my congratulations to all the winners and nominees of this year's Sanctuary Awards.

The Net Zero and Resource Efficiency Award was given to the Net-zero Carbon Accommodation Programme (NetCAP) which implemented new carbon efficient accommodation across the defence training estate. Delivered by DIO in partnership with Landmarc Support Services and modular construction specialists Reds10, NetCAP is part of a nationwide initiative to improve the lived experience for the Armed Forces whilst supporting the MOD's net zero carbon emissions goals.

Richard Brooks, DIO Principal Environmental Support and Compliance, said:

DIO is proud to host the Sanctuary Awards to celebrate the positive work taking place throughout Defence on climate change and sustainability initiatives.

DIO takes this work incredibly seriously and we are pleased to continue to contribute to the wider Defence and government sustainability targets. Congratulations to all the winners and thank you for your contribution to making Defence greener.

## More information

Browse the [full list of Sanctuary Award winners 2021](#) and details about their individual projects.

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## [Guatemala's juristic sector receives valuable inputs on gender equality](#)



The British Embassy, the Law Society of England and Wales, UN Women Guatemala and Guatemalan law firms Denton's Muñoz, BLP, Aguilar Castillo Love, who make up the core group, [presented the results](#).

The report entitled "Analysis and proposals of female lawyers in Guatemala to promote gender equality in the legal sector" collects the experiences, challenges, proposals and potential solutions to overcome the barriers that

lawyers face in the legal profession.

The study consisted of three phases; the first one being a nationwide survey with Guatemalan lawyers from various fields; a second one, which celebrated 14 round consultation tables, and a final phase of information analysis.

Subsequently, the group shared the main challenges identified in relation to conscious and unconscious prejudices. It was also discussed the understanding of flexible work to balance job and family life, as well as the wage gap.

Through this approach, the evidence collected will allow the design and implementation of measures to strengthen and improve the representation and equal participation of women in the exercise of their profession in the future.

Finally, the group shared proposals and potential solutions to the different personal, institutional and educational challenges within the juridical profession. It also considered the importance of including men as agents of change to advance gender equality in the country.

Barbara Amono-Oceng, Charge d'Affairs at the British Embassy, said:

Gender equality contributes to safer and more prosperous societies. Advancing the issue of gender equality, as well as the rights of women and girls, are part of the values that my Embassy seeks to promote in Guatemala.

Published 22 March 2022

Last updated 4 April 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 4 April 2022

Updated with link to the results of the report Analysis and proposals of women in the legal sector to promote gender equality in Guatemala.

2. 22 March 2022

Added translation

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## [Commissioners appointed to tackle failures at Sandwell](#)

- Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL will provide continuity of leadership as Managing Director Commissioner
- Commissioners will work with the council to address serious

mismanagement

- Local Government Minister calls for far reaching changes to rebuild trust

Commissioners have been appointed to implement positive and far-reaching changes at Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council today (22 March 2022).

The move comes after an external review revealed a “deeply troubling picture of mismanagement and of ineffective scrutiny and accountability arrangements” at the council.

Two Commissioners with a proven record of leadership, transformation and strong governance have now been appointed to work collaboratively with the council to deliver the needed improvements.

The Commissioners will take over functions associated with the governance and scrutiny of strategic decision-making by the Council, including those relating to the appointment and dismissal of statutory officers.

Sandwell councillors have welcomed working with the appointed commissioners to support their journey of improvement.

Local Government Minister Kemi Badenoch MP said:

Given the clear evidence of the failings at Sandwell Council, I have decided that it is necessary for government to intervene.

I am confident that, working collaboratively with these commissioners, the council will build on their recent progress to make the necessary improvements and rebuild trust with the community they serve.

The Commissioners will be led by Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL, the current interim Chief Executive Officer who has been leading the council since August 2021. Kim also worked as the Chief Executive of the London Borough of Newham for 8 years. He will be supported by Assistant Commissioner Jim Taylor, former Chief Executive of Salford City Council prior to his retirement in 2021.

Managing Director Commissioner Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL said:

I am looking forward to continuing my work with Sandwell Council and building on the progress of recent months to better serve the people of Sandwell.

### **Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL (Managing Director Commissioner)**

Kim has more than 35 years of public sector experience, including 8 years as Chief Executive of the London Borough of Newham. He was also Director of

Children's Services at both the London Borough of Newham and South Tyneside Council and a Children's Services Director at Leicester City Council. Kim was appointed Interim Chief Executive of Sandwell Council in August 2021 after being temporarily released from his role as Group Director for strategic partnerships at McLaren Construction Group. Kim has also been President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services and chaired the Government's Libraries Taskforce.

### **Jim Taylor (Assistant Commissioner)**

Jim served for 6 years as Chief Executive of Salford City Council prior to his retirement in 2021. He also fulfilled the role of Interim Chief Executive of Trafford Borough Council simultaneously from July 2018 to February 2019. Prior to this Jim was the Chief Executive of Rochdale Council having also served as Director for Children's Services at Tameside MBC. In June 2021 Jim was appointed by the Secretary of State to undertake an external assurance review of governance at Slough Borough Council.

The Commissioners will provide their first report within the next 3 months. Further reports will be provided every 6 months, or as agreed with the Commissioners.

Commissioners will work collaboratively with Emma Taylor, Chief Executive of Sandwell Children's Trust and Mark Gurrey, the Department for Education's children's services adviser and Chair of the Council's improvement board for children's services. This will ensure that the improvements overseen to date through the Department for Education's statutory intervention continue to be made.