

## [Press release: PM call with Taoiseach Varadkar: 16 Oct 2017](#)

The Prime Minister spoke to Taoiseach Leo Varadkar this afternoon.

On Storm Ophelia, the Prime Minister expressed her sympathies for the loss of life and said the UK Government stood ready to provide any support if requested.

They discussed the political situation in Northern Ireland and their shared concern over the lack of devolved Government in Northern Ireland for over 9 months.

Both leaders noted that while progress has been made over the past few weeks significant gaps still remained, including on Irish language, and it was up to the two main parties to overcome differences and reach agreement.

The Prime Minister said she was absolutely clear that it was in the interests of everyone in Northern Ireland to see a fully functioning Executive up and running so that local decisions could be made by local politicians.

On the UK's departure from the EU, they discussed the importance of maintaining constructive progress in the negotiations. Both agreed to continue discussions at EU Council later this week and the Prime Minister reiterated the UK Government's commitment to protecting the Belfast Agreement and the Common Travel Area.

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## [Press release: South London man convicted for large number of unlicensed medicines](#)

Kim-Andre Frantzen, of Kenley, South London, was sentenced today at Guildford Crown Court for the supply and possession of substantial quantities of unlicensed medicines.

MHRA investigators raided properties in South London and seized more than 209,250 doses of unlicensed products, including erectile dysfunction medicines worth more than £471,000.

Frantzen pleaded guilty to the charges and was sentenced to 9 months imprisonment, suspended for 18 months, and 200 hours of unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay a £100 victim surcharge plus costs of £2,500.

MHRA is currently running the #FakeMeds campaign to warn people against buying potentially dangerous or useless unlicensed medicines sold by illegal online suppliers.

MHRA Head of Enforcement, Alastair Jeffrey, said:

Selling unlicensed medicines is illegal and can pose a serious risk to health.

Unlicensed medicines can be dangerous as you just don't know what's in them, or if they even work. They may contain dangerous ingredients that could have awful consequences for your health.

Criminals don't care about improving your health – they are only interested in your wallet. So why take that risk?

We will continue to track down and prosecute those who are willing to put others' health in jeopardy.

Visit [www.gov.uk/fakemedes](http://www.gov.uk/fakemedes) for [tips on buying medicines safely online](#) and how to avoid unscrupulous sites.

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## [Press release: Government actions a further step in homeless prevention](#)

New guidance to make sure local authorities intervene earlier to help prevent families and individuals becoming homeless in the first place has been published today (16 October 2017).

The guidance, which is subject to an [8-week consultation](#), sets out how local councils should implement the [Homelessness Reduction Act](#), due to come into effect in April 2018. The new Act requires councils to provide services to all at risk of becoming homeless, on top of those with a priority need such as families with children and those who are vulnerable.

Following further discussions with local authorities in England on the resources required to implement the Act, the government is providing an additional £11.7 million in new burdens funding to local authorities, taking the total amount to £72.7 million. This additional funding will be shared among local authorities over 2 years to meet the requirements of the Act.

The government will also be providing a share of £3 million to local authorities to support them in upgrading their data systems to allow them to assess how the Act is changing homeless prevention in their areas. This comes on top of the government's investment of £550 million until 2020 for

homelessness and rough sleeping.

Minister for Homelessness Marcus Jones said:

Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping are complex issues with no single solution, but this government is determined to help the most vulnerable in society. That's why we're implementing the most ambitious legislative reform in decades, the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Local authorities play a vital role in implementing the Act. Therefore the guidance and government funding will support them in making sure people will get the help they need earlier to prevent them becoming homeless in the first place.

The consultation asks for views on the guidance for local councils as they prepare to undertake their new duties under the Act, including:

- Making information and advice about homelessness available to all residents free of charge. This includes advice on preventing homelessness and securing accommodation, as well as rights under the Act, and how to access help.
- Tailoring advice to meet the particular needs of vulnerable groups, including victims of domestic abuse and young adults leaving care.
- Working collaboratively with people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, to agree a personalised housing plan based on their needs and circumstances. The plan will set out the 'reasonable steps' the local authority and the customer will take to prevent homelessness or help to secure alternative housing.
- Providing help to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants, including single people who do not have 'priority need', and those who might be considered 'intentionally homeless'.
- Securing and helping to secure suitable safe accommodation for people who are homeless, or helping them to stay in their current home wherever possible and appropriate.

The [8-week consultation](#) closes on 11 December 2017.

The Homelessness Code of Guidance has been drafted with the assistance of a working group of local authorities and other stakeholders, and the final version will be published in the spring 2018.

The government is also continuing to fund free training through the [National Housing Advisory Service](#), a partnership between Shelter and Citizens Advice, for local authority staff on the Homelessness Reduction Act up until April 2018.

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## [Press release: Progress made at EU talks with devolved governments](#)

Agreement has been reached between the UK Government and the devolved administrations on the principles that will underpin the process for bringing back powers from the EU to the UK.

The agreement came at a Joint Ministerial Committee (EN) in London today chaired by the First Secretary of State Damian Green MP with the Scottish and Welsh Governments. A representative from the Northern Ireland civil service also attended.

### **The First Secretary of State Damian Green said:**

Following a set of constructive discussions with the Scottish and Welsh Governments, we have today agreed a set of principles that will underpin the process of repatriating EU powers.

On the day when the UK leaves the EU, all parts of the UK need to be ready. It is the government's intention that the EU Withdrawal Bill will ensure a strong UK internal market, while safeguarding and adding to the decision-making powers of the devolved administrations.

These principles will hopefully now pave the way to agreeing a set of frameworks that will deliver vital certainty and continuity for people and businesses across the United Kingdom.

### **Note to editors**

The communique from the meeting can be found [here](#)

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## [Press release: Furniture director shelved with a 6 year ban](#)

Rebecca Dale-Essex, of London, knowingly removed the money over a 24 day period prior to the company going into liquidation. She was the sole director of Belle Maison Direct Limited, which sold children's furniture until it went into liquidation on 20 April 2016.

£42,000 of the amount removed came after she had informed the local council

that her company had insufficient funds to make payments in respect of outstanding business rates. In total, she left creditors, including the council, out of pocket by £140,314.

She provided a disqualification undertaking to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy which prevents her from directly or indirectly becoming involved in the promotion, formation or management of a company for six years.

Commenting on the disqualification, Martin Gitner, Deputy Chief Investigator of Insolvent Investigations, Midlands and West at the Insolvency Service, said:

Rebecca Dale-Essex deliberately removed significant amounts of cash from the company that was for her own benefit, leaving little, if anything, for the creditors of her company.

Company directors should note that the Insolvency Service will investigate and remove them from the business environment if they have acted to the detriment of the company creditors.

Rebecca Dale-Essex's date of birth is September 1971 and she resides in London; She was appointed as a director on 28 January 2009.

Belle Maison Direct Limited (Company number 06804657) was incorporated on 28 January 2009 and was placed into Creditors voluntary liquidation on 20 April 2016.

On 7 September 2017, the Secretary of State accepted a Disqualification Undertaking from Dale-Essex for 6 years, from 28 September 2017.

The matters of unfitness, which she did not dispute in the Disqualification Undertaking, were that:

- Between 19 June 2015 and 13 July 2015, despite knowing the amounts due in respect of Business Rates, she caused BMD to enter into transactions to the detriment of the company and its creditors totalling of £121,500, which worsened its insolvent position. These monies were funds held in BMD's bank accounts, which she transferred to herself.
- Further, £42,000 of these funds were transferred between 7 July 2015 and 13 July 2015, after she had emailed the Council advising BMD had insufficient funds to maintain repayments to a historic balance outstanding in respect of Business Rates on 7 July 2015.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies.

The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: