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THE PRIME MINISTER
Personal Minute

CABINET COLLEAGUES

GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND OPEN DATA

Since 2010, the Government has been at the forefront of opening up data to allow the public and press to hold public bodies to account. Such online transparency is crucial to delivering value for money, to cutting waste and inefficiency, and to ensuring every pound of taxpayers' money is spent in the best possible way. Indeed, such data has allowed those working within departments and councils to identify savings and stop bad spending they did not otherwise know about.

The sunlight of transparency also acts in itself as an important check and balance, and helps ensure the highest standards of public life amongst senior Government representatives. Alongside this, open data has great potential to deliver better public services through innovative uses of digital and mobile technology.

I now want the Government to embrace the next stage of the transparency agenda. Data needs to be in an open and usable format so that third parties can re-use and create value from that data. It is not enough to have open data; quality, reliability and accessibility are also required. We must continue to look at how the range of information published by Government can be expanded and made as useful as possible to citizens, business, the voluntary sector and Government itself.

Today, we have published new guidelines that clarify not only what core transparency data should be published by central Government (Annex A) and how frequently; but also how we will ensure it is available in the most usable format and is easy to find. A small number of departments have been falling behind in their transparency commitments, so I would be grateful if departments would take immediate action to meet this timetable for data transparency.

This guidance represents the minimum requirements which are common to all central Government departments. But you can and should go further. I know all departments publish far more data than this, and I want the energy and innovation in open data which has helped us lead the global rankings to continue. Central Government should lead the example – and local Government and other parts of the public sector should follow.

We should rightly be proud of our global reputation as a leader on data transparency, and I am determined that we should remain at the forefront of this exciting digital agenda.

I am copying this minute to Cabinet colleagues, the Cabinet Secretary and the Chief Executive of the Civil Service and Permanent Secretary for the Cabinet Office.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'R. M.', with a small dot at the end.

ANNEX A - CENTRAL GOVERNMENT CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY COMMITMENTS

Government has committed to publishing core transparency information, known collectively as the Central Government Corporate Transparency Commitments.

The following are published centrally by the Cabinet Office:

- Civil Service sickness absence data
- Ministers' interest declarations
- Ministerial salary data
- Senior civil servants' names, grades, job titles and annual pay rates
- Special advisers numbers and annual costs, including names, pay bands and salary

Departments are required to publish the following themselves:

- Central Government contracts, tender opportunities and contract award notices, over £10,000
- Central Government spending over £25,000
- Gender pay gap data
- Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP) data
- Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP) senior responsible owners
- Ministerial gifts, hospitality, travel and meetings
- Monthly payment card data over £500
- Non-consolidated performance related pay data
- Official Development Assistance
- Organogram data
- Prompt payment data
- Senior officials' business appointment rules advice
- Senior officials' business expenses, hospitality and meetings
- Special advisers' gifts, hospitality and meetings
- Spend control data
- Trade union facility time data (from 31 July 2018)
- Workforce management information

Guidance for publishing this data is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-to-publish-central-government-transparency-data

Government publishes many other types of transparency information. The list of Central Government Corporate Transparency Commitments includes commitments which are common to all central Government departments. It excludes departmental commitments which are the domain of one department only; and requirements for local Government. It also excludes transparency information which is published, for example, as part of Single Departmental Plans or Annual Reports and Accounts.