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FOR INFORMATION – PUBLICATION OF 2018/19 ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESS AGAINST THE GREENING GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS

Dear Philip

I am writing to inform the Environmental Audit Committee of my intention to publish the 2018/19 Annual Report on progress against the Greening Government Commitments. I plan to publish this report as soon as possible in line with pre-existing commitments.

Background

The Greening Government Commitments (GGCs) are intended to demonstrate the government's leadership in improving the environmental sustainability of its own estate. The publication of this report is a reminder of the need to show our leadership in environmental sustainability as we work towards delivering net zero by 2050. As the first country to industrialize, we have a responsibility to lead the way globally, and have committed to urgent action on the climate crisis, including being the first major economy to make a net zero commitment.

Specific GGC targets are set for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, waste, domestic flights and water across government, and for improving sustainable procurement by 2020 compared to a 2009 to 2010 baseline. This report covers the financial year 2018 to 2019 and is the eighth annual report on progress. This year's report shows that the government has once again reduced greenhouse gas emissions. There have been improvements on waste too, with 40% less waste generated, 65% of waste recycled and only 7% of waste sent to landfill compared to 2009/10. Departments used 10% less water.

One area where we are falling short is on domestic flights – and this has already been raised in the media. Domestic flights have only fallen by 28% compared to the target of a 30% reduction relative to the 2009 to 2010 baseline. Some departments have exceeded the government-wide reduction target (HMRC, DWP, DHSC, CO, DfT, HMT and LOD) while a similar number have increased the number of flights they have taken compared with the baseline year of 2009/10 (DCMS, DfID, FCO, NCA and ONS). Growth in personnel numbers has contributed to the increase in flights for DCMS in particular, but also for a number of the



other departments which reported an increase in flights. However, these mixed results highlight that, while performance on the whole is strong, there is much more we can do to demonstrate leadership in this area.

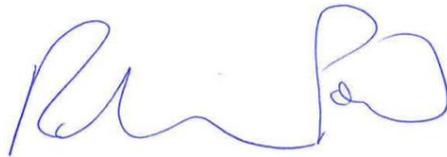
The report demonstrates that reducing negative environmental effects also reduces costs to the public purse. The combined savings from reduced energy consumption, waste and water are estimated at almost £161 million.

Regulatory Impact, Legislation and Devolution

There are no regulatory or legislative implications, and the report concerns the operations of the UK Government only, and not the Devolved Administrations.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in the GGCs.

Yours sincerely,



REBECCA POW MP