



Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

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From the Chair of the Committee

The Rt Hon Suella Braverman QC MP
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Prosecution of Animal Welfare Offences

As you will be aware the RSPCA announced on 28 January that it will seek to transfer its role in prosecuting animal welfare offences in England and Wales to the Crown Prosecution Service.

This was something a previous EFRA Committee recommended in its 2016 report, *Animal Welfare in England*, and the current Committee is also supportive of such a move in principle. However, recognising the pressures the prosecution service is already under, we would first want assurances that the CPS would be funded as to properly prioritise this vital work. Our aim should be to increase the number of animal abusers brought to justice, whilst correcting the weaknesses in the current system our report identified.

The Committee would therefore be grateful if you could tell it what the Government's position is on transferring responsibility for animal welfare prosecutions, and what discussions have already happened with the RSPCA regarding their future role in investigations and prosecutions. Furthermore, if the Government is minded to agree that the CPS should take on these new responsibilities what additional funding and capabilities will it be provided with?

Yours Sincerely

Neil Parish
Chair of the Committee

CC: Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Chris Stark, Chief Executive, RSPCA