Melanie Dawes CB  
Permanent Secretary  
MHCLG  
2 Marsham Street  
LONDON  
SW1P 4DF

11 March 2019

Dear Permanent Secretary,

HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

Thank you for the update from the department on 20th December, where the department provided a selection of statistics on homelessness from its new system H-CLIC. We note the caveats on the data usefully provided by the department. The recommendation by the Committee was, however, that the Department for Communities and Local Government should, by the end of 2018, write to the Committee to explain what reductions have been made across all measures of homelessness. The statistics supplied give only a partial picture; therefore, I would be grateful if you would supply the Committee with an up to date picture across all measures of homelessness from the new data. I am particularly interested in the full picture on rough sleeping and the overall number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation. I am aware, as you set out in your letter, that you consider there to be practical barriers to using the new data for comparing trends across time. Nevertheless, I would be very grateful indeed if you could set out where possible how data you have supplied the Committee with compares to the period before the implementation of the new data system. In addition, I would also be grateful if you could provide a covering, explanatory commentary setting out your understanding of the impact of the introduction of the new legislation on trends in homelessness.

Secondly the department updated us on progress on our recommendation that The Department for Work and Pensions should, by the end of 2018, write to the Committee to set out what work it has undertaken to identify any elements of welfare reform that are having an impact on homelessness and what steps it has taken to mitigate them. We note the feasibility study you mention as having been done jointly between MHCLG and DWP. However, you have not answered the question posed in the recommendation, to identify any elements of welfare reform that are having an impact on homelessness. Thus, we would be grateful if you would share the feasibility study with the Committee as it includes a rapid evidence
assessment of the effects of welfare reform on homelessness: precisely the question asked by the Committee.

Meg Hillier
Chair, Committee of Public Accounts