

# Asset purchase facility (APF) ceiling, November 2020

## Correspondence

The letters exchanged between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Governor of the Bank of England confirm the increase in the limit of assets that the APF is authorised to purchase, financed by the issuance of central bank reserves.

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## A technology-enabled justice system

A discussion with Sir Geoffrey Vos, Chancellor of the High Court of England and Wales

Presenting a #DynamicUK, the British High Commission in Cyprus has taken the initiative to launch an insightful webinar series focused on sharing the effects that COVID-19 has had on the world. The webinar reveals how elements of the UK adapted to the pandemic and how they continue to innovate to rise to the challenges they face.

The British High Commission has opened up an invitation to six highly innovative British professionals from various industries to share their knowledge and expertise on how the current pandemic has affected their fields. In our first discussion, Christophoros Christophi, of Christophi and Associates LLC, spoke to Sir Geoffrey Vos about the effect of the pandemic on the Judiciary. They also discussed Sir Geoffrey's vision of a technology-enabled justice system.

Sir Geoffrey Vos is the Chancellor of the High Court, and soon to be Master of Rolls, the head of Civil justice in England and Wales. He has responsibility for the conduct of business in the Business and Property Courts and prior to that, he was a Lord Justice of Appeal from 2013 and a President of the European Network of Councils for the Judiciary. He is a keen proponent of technology and in November Sir Geoffrey launched the LawTech Delivery Panel's statement on Cryptoassets and Smart Contracts.

In this interview, Sir Geoffrey analyses ways that technology can be used to improve access to justice, to reduce delays and costs as well as the barriers that may stand in the way of major reform, including strategies that might win the hearts and minds of the legal sector and overcome its reluctance to embrace change. Sir Geoffrey stated:

“When preparing this talk, I looked back to the talk I gave in Nicosia on 15th June 2018 which was titled ‘English Law underpinning FinTech, Legal Tech, and RegTech’. I said that the common law was peculiarly well-adapted for use in e-justice and online courts. And I remarked that in an era when people can get every kind of service instantly or at worst the next day by calling it up on their smartphones, it is inconceivable that they will accept, in the longer term, the delays that are inherent in almost all justice systems. That was why we needed to move fast to develop Online Dispute Resolution before the millennials lose faith in justice itself.”

Throughout this enlightening discussion, the High Court Chancellor analyses the new era of online courts brought forward by the pandemic, and his vision of an integrated Alternative Dispute Resolution that is supported by the Judiciary, as well as technology can assist in the resolution of high profile and complex cases. Sir Geoffrey stated: “In my view, even the most complex and high-profile cases can be resolved more quickly, at lower cost and more efficiently with the help of legal technology...The current UK system, which you operate in Cyprus too, originated in the 19th century. It needs a total re-think both in the UK and in Cyprus. I know that you are in the process of reform and modernisation and that Lord Dyson was involved with that work, but I am talking about something more extensive. Still more radical reform is needed. ”

Discover more and gain insights on justice and technology, by watching the entire webinar in the video below.

[#DynamicUK Online Discussion Series – Sir Geoffrey Vos](#)

Check out our social media channels for more exciting upcoming discussions!

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## [Help make Mottram's £228 million bypass happen](#)

The Highways England scheme will take traffic away from Mottram in Longdendale, reducing noise and improving air quality in the village as well as tackling congestion and making journeys more reliable.

The village is on the 25-mile trans-Pennine route between Manchester and Sheffield, connecting the M67 in the North West to the M1 in Yorkshire. Around 25,000 vehicles travel along the A57 through Mottram every day, including over 2,000 HGVs – equivalent to one lorry entering the village every 42 seconds.

The new two-mile bypass will run from the roundabout at the end of the M67 (junction 4) to a new junction on the A57 in Woolley Bridge. You can have your say on the proposals in a new six-week public consultation which

launches today (Thursday 5 November) and ends on Thursday 17 December.

## The A57 in numbers

Jim O'Sullivan, Highways England's chief executive, said:

Our plans for a new road around Mottram will help local communities by taking traffic away from the village, and we value your views to help make it happen.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

We're working harder than ever to level up infrastructure and deliver for the Northern Powerhouse. This new bypass is another great example of that. It will boost connectivity, better linking two key northern cities in Sheffield and Manchester, tackle congestion – including by taking through traffic away from Mottram, Stalybridge and High Peak – and improve air quality.

It's vital that the new route works best for drivers, residents and businesses who use this key road every day. I'd encourage everyone to have their say on this road's future, and I look forward to seeing plans progress.

The scheme will include a new dual carriageway to the north of Mottram which will connect the motorway roundabout to the A57 at Mottram Moor. A new single carriageway road from Mottram Moor to Woolley Bridge will also separate Glossop traffic from vehicles travelling over the Pennines, along the A628 Woodhead Pass.

Thousands of consultation brochures are being delivered to homes and businesses along the route, and Highways England's project team are holding three webinars to provide more details on the proposals and answer your questions.

The online events will take place at midday and 6pm on Wednesday 18 November, and at 2pm on Saturday 21 November. Visit the [scheme web page](#) to take part.

You can also speak to a member of the project team by calling 0808 196 4502 every Tuesday until the end of November from 10am until 3pm, and from 4pm until 8pm.

Peter Molyneux, Major Roads Director at Transport for the North, said:

Enhancing Trans-Pennine connectivity is a key focus for Transport for the North. We know all too well that our current east-west routes, with their restricted capacity and reliability issues, are

holding back our people and businesses.

The Mottram bypass, along with a number of other schemes in this regional corridor, will make a significant difference to safety, journey times and reliability for longer trips, and also reduce congestion and pollution locally.

We urge everyone who lives in this area, and those who currently, or may in future, use this route, to respond to the consultation.

Highways England is delivering £14 billion of major road projects over the next five years, increasing the quality, capacity and safety of England's motorways and major A roads.

Demonstrating the Government's commitment to boosting the Northern Powerhouse, four schemes are due to be completed in the North West by spring 2025 and another five major projects are planned to start construction including Mottram bypass.

Work is also taking place to improve the flow of traffic and increase capacity at Westwood roundabout in Tankersley, on the stretch of the Manchester to Sheffield route near the M1 in South Yorkshire.

Highways England is widening the approach roads at the junction and adding an extra lane on the roundabout, as well as installing traffic lights to help reduce congestion and make journeys more reliable.

Nine new electronic road signs are also being installed along the A628 Woodhead Pass to provide drivers with early warnings of closures due to bad weather or other incidents, and three new remotely-operated gates will be used to close the route during heavy snow.

A planning application for Mottram bypass is due to be submitted next year once the consultation responses have been considered and, if the project is approved by the government, construction work could start by spring 2023.

You can find out more about the proposals and complete a consultation response form via the [scheme web page](#).

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

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# Ensuring UN Police can remain effective

Many thanks indeed, Madam President, and thank you also to all of our excellent briefers today for their thoughts and for sharing in particular their perspectives from the ground.

This is an issue that's of real interest to me. It was actually the first thing that I ever worked on in our foreign service, international policing and particularly UN policing, and I've seen just how effective UN policing can be from the Balkans to Sierra Leone, so it's very good to have this discussion today.

I also want to start by offering our thanks through you, our police commissioners, to the women and men in UN Police components around the world who work on our behalf to protect and serve vulnerable communities. In this sixtieth anniversary year of the creation of UN Police, we are reminded again of their enormous dedication, professionalism and courage as they continue their work against the challenging backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Now, Madam President, UN policing is a fundamental part of peacekeeping, as we've heard again and again today. Police play a central role in helping to establish a protective environment for civilians in restoring security and justice, and critically in re-establishing the rule of law in conflict affected areas. We owe it both to officers deployed in the field and the people they serve to continue to enhance the effectiveness of UN policing through practical reform. The UK was a strong supporter of the 2016 external review of the UN Police Division, and we note that a number of those recommendations from the review remain outstanding.

But today, Madam President, I would like to highlight three important areas that we need to get right in order to ensure that UN policing can remain effective. A sustained focus on these issues will be critical to achieve the vision set out in the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping agenda.

The first of these is that policing must be fully integrated into mission planning processes throughout the life of a mission, from inception to transition. Police experts need to be at the table and to be supported by relevant intelligence, reporting and data. Missions must be able to undertake continuous assessment in order to ensure that policing activity remains appropriate to the needs on the ground. So we have just got to keep thinking about that.

Second is about pledges of personnel. These need to be tailored to the needs of the mission and to contribute to achieving the Secretary-General's Gender Parity Strategy. Recruitment needs to be fair, timely and merit-based, selecting the right skills, capabilities and expertise that particular missions need. We welcome the use of tools such as the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System to help identify capability gaps and to seek

pledges to fill them. The full, equal and meaningful participation of women in UN policing is not only a moral imperative, but a critical operational consideration too. Trust between UNPOL components and local communities can be more readily established if police reflect those they are serving.

And our third point is that police performance must be prioritised. When personnel perform to the high standards we all expect, they are better able to deliver their mandates and ensure their own safety and security. We look forward to the implementation of the Peacekeeping Performance and Accountability Framework in respect of police, but we also stress the urgent need for the finalisation of the policing Strategic Guidance Framework. This guidance then needs to be operationalised, leading to the development of the right manuals and training tools to allow police contributors to understand what standards their personnel need to meet.

Now, I'm glad we're having an interactive session because I'd like to turn to a few questions, if I may, and the first is for Assistant-Secretary-General Zouev. It is expected, ASG, that demands on the UN Police Division will continue to grow, spanning both police operations and non-mission settings in the coming period. It would be very good to hear from you what priorities and extra resources the Department of Peace Operations is providing for the Division. Is there enough capacity to undertake the necessary planning for police deployments, including in relation to transitions? And if I may just come back as well to the Strategic Guidance Framework, it would be very good to have an update on the status of this framework and to know when we can expect this to be finalised and published.

Then if I may, Madam President, a couple of questions for our excellent briefers. The first goes to the UNMISS Police Commissioner, Ms Vuniwaqa. I would be very interested to understand what reflections on the process of capacity building Commissioner Vuniwaqa has when it comes to South Sudan's National Police Service. In particular, how is UNMISS determining when and what kind of policing responsibilities should be shared with the SSNPS? So how do we get that balance right of transitioning or passing over responsibilities?

And the second question was to the MINUSMA Police Commissioner, Mr. Yacouba. Recent developments with the Malian security forces, and your coordination with them, has probably changed in the current environment – in other words, after the coup. I wonder if you could tell us how MINUSMA is managing any challenges in relation to that? As things stand, do you feel you have the right resources to plan and conduct supporting activities when it comes to embedding the rule of law?

Thank you very much and a very good day to all of you.

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# Coronavirus (COVID-19): Letters from Kelly Tolhurst to caravan and park home owners

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## 1. 16 December 2020

Added: 7 December letter from Kelly Tolhurst to trade bodies representing caravan and park home site owners

## 2. 4 November 2020

First published.