

# Coronavirus (COVID-19): letter to the energy sector

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

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## The Secretary of State has appointed four new Commissioners to the Gambling Commission.

### **Terry Babbs**

Terry Babbs' career spans the private and public sectors. His executive career was in regulation, international trade and supply chain management with Tesco plc and he has served on and chaired a number of international organisations in these fields. His subsequent non-executive career includes two terms on the Legal Services Board where he also chaired their Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. He is currently vice chair of the Investment Committee of Oxfam's Enterprise Development Programme and a non-executive director of HMRC's Valuation Office Agency. Terry is also the Senior Independent Director at the General Dental Council and chair of its Finance and Performance Committee.

### **Brian Bannister**

Brian Bannister is currently the Executive Director for Strategic Insight and Influence at The Law Society of England and Wales. Brian joined from KPMG where he served for seven years as Global Head of Communications, with responsibility for the network's global media and external profile as well as internal communications for more than 200,000 partners and staff. Prior to KPMG Brian was PwC's UK Director of Communications for six years, leading media relations, digital, internal communications and public affairs. Previously Brian was PwC's UK Director of Public Affairs with responsibility for relations with Government, regulators and other stakeholders and was a member of PwC's European and Global PwC Public Affairs Boards. He holds an Honours and Masters Degree in Political Science.

## **Jo Hill**

Jo Hill is Executive Director of Strategy and Risk at The Pensions Regulator. She is responsible for Corporate Strategy, the Regulatory model, Risk Management Framework and Data and Analysis.

Jo was previously Director of Market Intelligence, Data and Analysis at the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) accountable for the creation and delivery of the FCA's approach to data and analysis, Sector Views (common view of regulatory risk) and Consumer Agenda.

Prior to her appointment as Director of Market Intelligence, Data and Analysis, Jo held a number of roles across the FCA and Financial Services Authority in strategy, supervision, authorisations and enforcement, as well as roles in the banking and insurance sectors. Jo is also a Trustee of the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute.

## **Sir Martin Narey**

Sir Martin Narey became Director General (Chief Executive) of the Prison Service (England and Wales) in 1998 and led prisons for seven years and prisons and the probation service for three. He was the recipient of The UK Chartered Institute of Management's annual Gold Medal for Leadership. He was the first public sector recipient of this single annual award for ten years. He resigned from the Civil Service in 2005 to become Chief Executive of Barnardo's. He has subsequently advised the government about children's social care and has published a number of reports about the care system. He is Chair of My Foster Family; Chair Designate of The Sage (a music venue on Tyneside) and a NED on the board of Unilink Ltd. He is a visiting Professor at a number of Universities.

These roles are remunerated at £295 per day. These appointments have been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#), the process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Government's Governance Code requires that any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years is declared. This is defined as holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election. Neither Terry Babbs, Brian Bannister, Jo Hill or Sir Martin Narey have declared any activity.

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## **[UK statement in response to Dr Claus Neukirch, head of the OSCE mission to Moldova](#)**

Thank you Mr Chair,

I'd like to thank Ambassador Neukirch for his report to the Permanent Council. The UK supports a peaceful, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Transnistrian conflict on the basis of recognition of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova, within its internationally recognized borders, and with a special status for Transnistria.

Ambassador Neukirch, thank you for the work of the OSCE Mission to Moldova and your effective leadership. We welcome your open and cooperative manner which has allowed you to build up relationships of trust with the respective Chief Negotiators, all partners in the 5+2 process and other relevant actors.

Your report makes clear the unique challenges which the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has presented to the Mission since mid-March. We commend the way you have adapted to the new and evolving situation. Thank you for the creativity and energy you have shown while helping the parties address several issues which have arisen. In this context, we welcome the spirit of collaboration shown by Chisinau and Tiraspol over testing for cases of COVID-19 in the initial phase of the crisis.

Whilst noting this positive cooperation, we urge the parties to re-double their efforts to resolve several outstanding issues which have been generated by COVID-19. In particular, we refer to the challenges set out in your report around free movement of those resident in Transnistria who need to cross the de facto internal boundary line on a regular basis. This includes for work in the healthcare system and to access their bank accounts.

We believe that the Working Group on Health and the sub-Working Group on Banking could be convened to facilitate discussion of these issues.

Furthermore, we support the idea of a joint OSCE Mission-World Health Organisation visit to Transnistria to increase understanding of the impact of the pandemic in that region.

We regret the establishment of ad hoc check-points within the Security Zone following the outbreak of the viral pandemic. Although these have not prevented the Mission from undertaking its work, we must note that they represent a breach of the ceasefire agreement. It is regrettable that the Joint Control Commission (JCC) has not met in recent weeks and we hope that it will begin to do so again as a matter of priority.

Thank you also for the information you shared on developments related to the Cobasna ammunition depot. We call on the Russian Federation to involve the OSCE in the process of removal and destruction of Russian ammunition from Transnistria. This will ensure transparency, in accordance with the 1999 Istanbul Summit Declaration and subsequent extension of the mandate of the Mission to Moldova. We also recall the importance of the withdrawal of the Operational Group of Russian Forces as part of the framework of commitments undertaken in the Summit Declaration.

Ambassador Neukirch, we welcome the cooperation you reported with other OSCE executive structures, including the High Commissioner on National Minorities,

the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Representative on the Freedom of the Media. We also value the Mission's efforts to promote an inclusive, open and tolerant society and respect for human rights. We would be interested to hear more about the Mission's efforts to incorporate a gender perspective into its work, including its mediation efforts.

Ambassador Neukirch, we agree with you that the way in which the parties manage the current COVID-19 challenges could set the tone for a successful resumption of negotiations on the outstanding Berlin Plus Confidence Building Measures. In the interest of all citizens of the Republic of Moldova, the United Kingdom urges the parties to work together to resolve current differences in a collaborative manner.

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## [UK reiterates support for Libya's legitimate institutions](#)

News story

We continue to urge Libyan parties to cease fighting, engage in constructive dialogue and commit to an inclusive political solution.



In light of recent statements, the UK reaffirms its support for Libya's internationally recognised and legitimate institutions, as agreed in the 2015 Libyan Political Agreement and ratified by the UN Security Council.

These institutions are the Presidential Council, the Government of National Accord, House of Representatives and High Council of State. The UK is clear that any changes to these structures must not be taken unilaterally, but reached through dialogue, consensus and democratic principles.

We continue to urge Libyan parties to cease fighting and engage in constructive dialogue. An inclusive political solution – as set out by the Berlin Conference – offers the best hope for the stability and future

prosperity that the Libyan people need and deserve.

The UK reaffirms its support for the efforts of Acting Special Representative of the Secretary General, Stephanie Williams and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and renews its call for the parties to commit to a truce over Ramadan.

## **Further information**

Published 30 April 2020

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# **New tech will help keep the criminal justice system moving during COVID-19 pandemic**

- New video technology to support remote hearings in criminal courts
- Secure system can be accessed by a wide range of devices
- First phase of new video platform to be rolled out to more than 100 courts

HMCTS is bringing in a new video platform to enable all parties in a criminal hearing to take part remotely – allowing all magistrate and crown courts in England and Wales to hold secure hearings, making it easier to make sure justice continues to be served.

Most criminal cases are heard in magistrate courts and this technology – available for cases such as remand, custody time limit, and sentencing hearings – will help move people through the criminal justice system in these unprecedented times.

This technology will not be used for jury trials, and a judge will decide whether it is appropriate to use in any other hearing on a case-by-case basis. In addition, no defendant is appearing from their own home and sentencing is not taking place unless the defendant is in custody or physically present in the courtroom. If physically present and sentenced to custody, this will be dealt with in the usual way.

If people are unwell and can't come to court for a hearing, they must contact the court for that hearing to be rearranged.

Thanks to dedicated HMCTS staff, courts continue to prioritise all hearings relating to custody, detention and bail, and urgent applications for matters such as domestic violence, and statistics released today show that 90% of all cases since 14th April have been held remotely to ensure the vulnerable are

protected.

Courts Minister Chris Philp, said

It is essential that justice continues to be served in these difficult times and this new platform will help equip courts across England and Wales with secure and robust video technology to enable them to carry out more of their vital work.

I am extremely impressed at the way all those within the justice system have adapted so well to the unprecedented challenges we face

We have already seen a huge rise in the number of cases being heard remotely, and this innovation will ensure the wheels of justice continue to turn.

His Honour Judge Guy Kearl QC, Senior Circuit Judge at Leeds Crown Court, said:

In times of uncertainty, confirmation that the rule of law endures and justice will be served is a source of profound reassurance to us all.

This secure video conferencing technology is versatile and provides the functions essential to deliver a range of criminal hearings: I am delighted to be involved in its successful introduction.

The Kinly Cloud Video Platform (CVP) is initially being rolled out to 60 magistrates' courts and 48 crown courts currently open to the public, with others to follow as soon as possible. It is also being introduced to the Civil and Family courts.

CVP connects securely to the existing justice video network which links police stations and prisons to courts, and can be accessed by any internet-enabled device with a camera and a microphone.

Magistrates' courts in London, the South-East, the South-West and the Midlands have already begun using CVP, with the first going live earlier this month.

It has also been introduced in Crown Courts in Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle and Hull, with more courts in the South-East set to go live. The aim is for 16 magistrates' courts and nine crown courts to have access to CVP by the end of next week.

So far, HMCTS has run 412 remand hearings using CVP, brought on line 26 police custody suites, and connected 95 advocates, 42 Crown prosecutors, 20 Probation officers and two translators.

Amanda Pinto QC, Chair of the Bar Council, said:

We must keep the justice system going in the public interest. Barristers, along with the judiciary, court staff and many others, are determined to adapt quickly to delivering justice during Covid-19, including delivering it remotely. The new CVP platform is crucial to these efforts, enabling more cases to be heard without everyone having to gather in a physical courtroom. We have heard positive feedback from barristers involved in hearings where CVP has already been used. I am keen to see it rolled out widely to try and ensure that as far as possible, effective justice is delivered, not delayed.

DCC Tony Blaker from Kent Police and National Police Chief's Council lead for Courts, said:

Policing is adopting this innovative technology and building on our existing partnership with HMCTS; helping to protect the public and people working in criminal justice agencies. By holding court hearings remotely during this crisis, we can help to reduce the spread of the virus and ensure that the Criminal Justice System continues to operate effectively. We are working at pace with our partners to increase the use of technology, providing continued benefit to the public and keeping people safe.

## Notes to editors

- This technology will not be used for jury trials, and a judge will decide whether it is appropriate to use in any other hearing on a case-by-case basis
- Many hearings continue to be conducted by judges sitting in court and the aim is to re-open courts which have been temporarily suspended as soon as practicable
- Connection to a hearing is easy and straightforward: participants simply click on a link in an email invitation or in the Crown court digital case system to join
- Audio and video technology has long played a role in courts and tribunals, and HMCTS has significant experience in this field. Many courts, custody suites and prisons are already connected to the secure Justice Video Service (JVS) network, which enables communication between fixed end points
- The use of audio and video technology in court hearings has rapidly increased in response to the Covid-19 emergency
- To enable the criminal justice system to operate safely and flexibly during the pandemic, the [Coronavirus Act 2020](#) has provided for the use of video within the criminal jurisdiction. The use of video hearings remains always subject to judicial discretion. Video is not being used to run jury trials
- On 24 April 2020, courts and tribunals reported that the estimated use of audio in hearings increased to around 2,800 a day. Currently around 90% of cases in England and Wales have used audio and video technology

to some extent

- [Guidance on how to connect to a criminal hearing using CVP](#) is available on GOV.UK, and we plan to publish short videos demonstrating how to access the system. There is also a helpline number offering technical support to participants in hearings: 0330 808 9405
- Over the coming months we will continuously improve our approach to the use of audio-video alternatives during the coronavirus outbreak