

Update on funding for Crossrail



Today (1 December 2020), we're announcing that £825 million of additional borrowing will be made available to the Greater London Authority (GLA) for the purposes of Crossrail. The GLA intend to repay this loan via London's Business Rate Supplement and from the Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy. This agreement will ensure that the project continues to be funded.

The government remains committed to the rapid completion of the project, in a way that is fair to UK taxpayers and has committed to financing the completion of Crossrail. However, London – as the primary beneficiary – must ultimately bear any additional costs. Crossrail Ltd is committed to reducing its funding shortfall and will take all necessary steps to complete the project without requiring further additional funding. Transport for London (TfL) is ensuring that further independent analysis of costs is carried out.

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Expansion of the Technical Advisory Board Membership

News story

The Home Office is seeking to appoint up to seven individuals to the TAB, to represent the telecommunications industry, or to act as an independent board member.



Would you like to join a group of industry and government experts in analysing complex and technical issues to produce balanced and independent advice for the Home Secretary?

The Technical Advisory Board (TAB) is a non-departmental public body which was established under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) and whose remit was expanded under the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA). The TAB has two main duties; to consider the technical requirements and the financial consequences of a notice that is to be imposed upon a telecommunications operator (TO) and to provide advice to the Secretary of State if the TO seeks a review of the notice.

The roles offer exciting opportunities to contribute to the strategic direction of the TAB and to ensure that it can continue to function as an important safeguard for industry and government and contribute to consideration of the way in which these issues bear upon the government's future negotiations with the industry.

Further information is available on the [Cabinet Office website](#).

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Call for evidence launched for Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

- Inquiry Chair Sir Wyn Williams has today launched [a call for evidence](#) to invite views about and gather evidence relating to the Post Office Limited's IT system (Horizon) and events associated with its use
- while Sir Wyn will welcome evidence about all aspects of the use of Horizon which is relevant to the terms of reference of the Inquiry he would like to make clear his wish to receive a body of evidence relating to the human impact of the Horizon dispute
- to ensure the transparency of the Inquiry, information that it receives will be published on an additional website for public viewing whenever that is legally permissible and publication not inconsistent with other competing factors such data protection, confidentiality, and privacy

Evidence received will support the Inquiry's understanding of institutional settings and the experience of postmasters, employees and contractors at the Post Office Limited both historically, and as the company seeks to respond to the findings in the Horizon judgments and implement the measures set out in the settlement agreement.

The [call for evidence](#) will invite evidence and information from the public on the [Inquiry's terms of reference](#), call for written statements on the human impact of the Horizon dispute and seek questions from the public to be posed to the participants in the stage 2 open evidence session, which will focus upon hearing from the Post Office Limited, Fujitsu and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

Today, he has published a [Statement of Approach 002](#), setting out the type of information that will be made public, and when it will be available to view.

Records that meet the criteria set out in Statement of Approach 002 will be shared on a [new webpage](#) that can be accessed by anyone.

Sir Wyn Williams, Chair of the Horizon Post Office IT Inquiry, said:

I am very pleased that we have reached the point of a Call for Evidence in accordance with the timetable we set ourselves and I look forward to receiving a substantial volume of evidence both written and oral which will ensure that the Inquiry is very well equipped to ensure that it fulfils its terms of reference.

Today's developments follow the publication of a previous Statement of Approach (001) last month, in which Sir Wyn set out that senior members of the Post Office Limited, Fujitsu and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will be invited to give evidence in formal open sessions as part of the Inquiry. Post Office Ltd, Fujitsu (which supplied the

Horizon system) and BEIS have committed to fully cooperating with the Inquiry.

Individuals can view or participate in the Inquiry's public hearings and [a registration form](#) is available.

The non-statutory Inquiry is committed to understanding and acknowledging what went wrong in relation to Horizon and to ensuring that there is a public summary of the failings that occurred at Post Office Ltd so that they should never be repeated.

British Embassy Chisinau call for proposals: State Forestry Agency Reform

The British Embassy Chisinau seeks applications from organisations with experience of working on climate change, environmental issues, and governance reform in Moldova.

This call for proposals specifically seeks applications for projects related to the reform of the State Forestry Agency, "Moldsilva".

Please refer to the [Terms of Reference](#) for further details.

Budget

We welcome project proposals in the value range up to £10,000.

Selection criteria

- project alignment with the above mentioned specific priority
- projects should include clear gender and social inclusion activities or outcomes within the above mentioned thematic priorities wherever possible
- projects should have clearly defined, SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-limited) outputs and deliverables and demonstrate value for money
- project partners may be local, or national across Moldova, or international organisations
- funding may be awarded to consortia of local and/or international organisations; but there will need to be a clear lead organisation that will be accountable for financial and results management and delivery
- the agreed budget must be spent in full and all activities completed by 31 March 2021

- successful applicants will be required to submit final financial and narrative reporting
- as a general rule, grants should not be used to procure goods and equipment but this will be considered on a case-by-case basis; no more than 10% of project funds may be used for equipment. The budget may not be used for gifting
- payments will be made in MDL at an FCDO (Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office) rate.

Reporting and measure and evaluation

- the supplier will meet at least monthly with the British Embassy team to discuss ongoing progress against their project plan (including communications plan), risks and impact
- the supplier will be asked to formally submit financial and narrative reporting on the project as well as a completion report at the end of the project
- FCDO reserves the right to carry out evaluation visits at a time agreed with the supplier and after giving reasonable notice

Dependencies

The supplier is asked to assume that they will deliver an entirely independent intervention should they win the competition. Items such as office space, translation costs, security, legal fees, and insurance, transport and accommodation costs should be priced into the contract.

The supplier is responsible for due diligence of potential partners and for assessing, reporting on and mitigating all risks at a project level.

How to apply

Applicants must complete the Project Proposal and Project Budget forms (in English).

[Project Proposal Form Moldsilva](#) (ODT, 11.9KB)

[Activity Based Budget Template](#) (ODS, 10.3KB)

[Moldsilva Reform Project Terms of Reference](#) (ODT, 21.5KB)

Applicants must be aware that the British Embassy Chisinau will accept applications until close of business on 11 December 2020. Projects proposals submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration. Please note that the size of one message should not exceed 3 MB.

Applicants must send the completed Project Proposal and Project Budget forms to email: projects.chisinau@fcdo.gov.uk

'Build the Future' announced as theme for National Apprenticeship Week 2021

- Theme of 'Build the Future' announced for NAW2021
- Focus on how employers train, retain and achieve with apprenticeships
- Toolkit available online to assist the apprenticeship community in getting involved

"Build the Future" is the theme for NAW2021, taking place between 8 and 14 February 2021, aiming to encourage everyone to consider how apprenticeships help individuals to build the skills and knowledge required for a rewarding career.

The 14th annual week-long celebration of apprenticeships, taking place across England, will showcase the impact apprenticeships can have on communities, local businesses and regional economies and how they all benefit from the impact of apprenticeships.

As a result of the pandemic and many individuals relying on technology and virtual meetings more than ever, National Apprenticeship Week 2021 will be different, but just as exciting. NAW2021 will celebrate the motivating stories of how apprentices have helped business adapt and build during a difficult year.

Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, Gillian Keegan said:

Apprenticeships are a fantastic way to learn while you earn, opening up new and exciting career paths that can transform lives. It's been a tough year for everyone, but we want the theme for National Apprenticeship Week 2021 to be a springboard to look ahead to how apprenticeships can futureproof workforces and boost careers.

The week is a great opportunity to highlight the huge range of apprenticeships on offer – from Space Engineer to Registered Nurse. There are currently around 7,000 apprenticeship opportunities available on the Find An Apprenticeship website which will benefit individuals, businesses and local communities. I encourage everyone to get involved and help make it a success.

To support National Apprenticeship Week 2021, individuals, employers, training providers and communities are being encouraged to get involved, to celebrate apprenticeships and how they:

TRAIN apprentices, and future proof their workforce and careers through apprenticeships;

RETAIN apprentices, gaining the skills and knowledge needed by the business, and seeing apprentices thrive, whilst having impact;

ACHIEVE a real return on investment from apprentices; realising the business benefits of apprenticeships, with apprentices progressing in their chosen careers.

Peter Mucklow, Director, Apprenticeships, Education and Skills Funding Agency said:

There is no doubt that National Apprenticeship Week 2021 will be different this year in how we celebrate apprenticeship success.

We are however continuing to ask employers to encourage everyone to consider how apprenticeships can help build organisations for years to come; whilst showing the clear return on investment realised when apprentices are brought into the business. Employers are helping the nation to #BuildTheFuture through apprenticeships.

The diversity of career options and industries available now, through apprenticeships, is outstanding. We want all current apprentices from all sectors to get behind the Week and to showcase the positive impact of apprenticeships, on careers, families and communities.

A toolkit is available now to support the apprenticeship community with planning their activity for National Apprenticeship Week 2021. [Download the toolkit from GOV.UK](#).

Keep up to date with National Apprenticeship Week 2021 updates by following @Apprenticeships on Twitter, and National Apprenticeship Service on LinkedIn.

Use the hashtags #NAW2021 #BuildTheFuture in social media activity.

To find out more about apprenticeships, visit: www.apprenticeships.gov.uk