

To: Business & Operational Continuity Committee (BOCC)

Dear Member

Please find below the meeting note from Tuesday 1 September's meeting of the BOCC.

1. Monitoring of COVID-19 cases:

- Members discussed the types of metrics they are using to monitor COVID-19 cases in their local/surrounding areas. Primarily, members wanted to know where to find data that could help inform their decisions on back to work strategies or adapt their plans if the situation required.
- Members noted resources such as the [LGA's COVID-19 tracker](#) which has a breakdown by region so that comparisons can be made. [Public Health England](#) was also cited to have useful statistics on coverage. Members did note that with some resource sites there is challenge of accurate data, as often the published data is at least a week old.
- Members raised that greater access to information around public transport use would be very helpful in terms of their planning.
- Changes to business travel restrictions was then discussed, particularly international travel. Generally, firms are still restricting business travel, with some noting that inter-office travel restrictions remain in place. In instances where firms are allowing branch visits, they are being organised within a bubble in order to minimise the risk to staff.

[ACTION] UK Finance will reach out to previous guest speakers Lynn Thomas, St. John Ambulance, and Andy Liggins, City of London and invite them to the next meeting of the BOCC to give an update on these points.

2. WFH insurance policies:

- UK Finance updated members on the response received by the ABI on whether staff need to update their home insurance policies to align with their longer-term working from home plans. The ABI responded to UK Finance and stated that currently, no changes are being made of this kind. The ABI do recommend individuals discussing with their insurance providers if WFH is set to be a long-term change or if, as part of their role, they are having visitors to their property. The ABI are set to release reviewed communications on this in the coming weeks and UK Finance will update this committee on any changes to the industry's position.

[ACTION] UK Finance will seek clarity on whether this possible change to home insurance policies would only be directed at employee's, as opposed to contractors.

3. Local government:

- Members were asked to discuss how they have found their engagement with local governments during COVID-19. Some members note that they have experienced positive engagements with local council staff when they have visited their branches to carry out risk assessments etc. In most cases, branches received letters from their council to let them know they were visiting and during the visits were very collaborative.

- By way of an update, UK Finance noted that they were pursuing their communication links with the LGA to understand how they saw their role in terms of reviewing workplaces on a local level. UK Finance feel it would be helpful to understand if information from the banking sector could aid them in making their conclusions. In addition, what metrics they have been using when deciding on local lockdowns, or when engaging with government.

4. Back to work:

- Members commented on whether the recent push by government to get city staff back to work had changed any of their current return to work plans. Generally, firms note that this has not had an impact. One member commented that although this had not changed their back to work plans, they were experiencing an increase in staff voluntarily requesting to visit the office on an ad hoc basis.
- Members discussed whether they were seeing in practice any truth to the narrative around staff productivity declining. Most members note that they were not experiencing a decline in productivity and that, especially recently, working from home is becoming more of a choice and staff are choosing make use of flexible working options.
- Members note that there is still very much a concern around a second wave and especially concerns for staff who need to use public transport to get to work. Members would like to hear from City of London, as to their plans to ensure safe travel for commuters as public transport links start to be used more frequently.
- Members also wish to hear from City of London on the financial factors of commuting. With staff most likely returning to work on a flexible basis, members would like to see transport companies rethink the traditional season tickets schemes to match commuter needs going forward.

5. AOB

- UK Finance updated members on our engagement with HMT on the rise in reports of abuse against branch staff. UK Finance are looking to work with HMT to see how this issue can be resolved.
- Members discussed their experiences of customers responses to wearing face masks in branches and whether, as England is not in line with the devolved nations on this, this it has caused a negative effect. Most members had not experienced any negative feedback from customers on this point, in one case customers had contacted the firm directly to thank them for enforcing this.