

To: Business & Operational Continuity Committee
Cc'd: COVID 19 Exit Strategy Group

Dear member,

Please find below the meeting note from Tuesday's meeting of the BOCC, including some actions for your attention.

1. Testing the in Financial Services follow-up

- Members received an update from UK Finance on the government's asymptomatic testing programme. There has been a broad interest shown by firms since the offer was presented on 2 February and a number of firms have been in contact with UK Finance already with feedback and updates on their progress.
- UK Finance advised that they are in regular contact with representatives at DHSC and encouraged firms to contact Daisy Johnson if they are experiencing problems, need assistance in registering on the portal, or accessing any of the information webinars. The DHSC recently reported to UK Finance (see attached), that they have operationalised a testing site in coordination with the Canary Wharf Group, and that this will be accessible and may be of value for all members with staff attending offices in that area.
- For those firms who contacted UKF about accessing the home testing kits, the DHSC advised that this is currently in the pilot phase and once this has concluded and permissions are granted from MHRA, they will look to roll this out more widely and across different sectors. In the interim, DHSC encouraged the use of community asymptomatic testing sites for staff who cannot work from home. UK Finance will update this group accordingly on the timescales for accessing home test kits and any developments from government on whether the March 31 end-date is likely to be extended.
- Firms who had either not registered their interest in the programme or who had subsequently withdrawn after receiving further information shared their reasoning as to why they had chosen not to participate. Many cited that as the offer is only available in England at this point, some firms were concerned at the optics of not being able to offer testing to all staff, regardless of location. For those firms wanting to test on a large scale across with multiple sites, adhering to the government logistical guidelines would prove quite costly. Being able to conduct home testing may alleviate some of the practical issues of on-site testing.
- One member shared that they are currently piloting LFD home-testing to understand the impact on case numbers, and whether this type of testing offers value for money. The member agreed to share with the committee the lessons-learned exercise once finalised in the coming weeks.
- UK Finance asked that members share their experiences to date and outline the reasons why they have, or haven't registered their interest, so that we may report back to the DHSC and ensure that they are aware of, and can work to resolve any issues. UK Finance noted that community testing is a significant factor of the government's road map out of lockdown, and the provision to test staff asymptotically is increasingly being encouraged across industries as being a key part of re-opening the economy, **ACTION**.

2. Return to office planning

- With the government roadmap out of lockdown planned for February 22, members discussed whether they have begun exploring their return to office plans for 2021. Members shared, that although they are not aiming for specific dates, and whilst they won't be replicating the process taken last year, they are using this time to reimagine their office spaces. Largely firms are using staff surveys and feedback opportunities to keep staff included in the process and to signpost the changes staff should expect to see.
- Many firms will be reconfiguring their office spaces to maximise collaborative layouts, greater use of shared desks and trialling how to balance the business between home and the office, with the greatest focus on staff-wellbeing. Firms shared that the timelines on a return to the office were still to be agreed, and would largely depend on the vaccination programme and the guidance from government.

3. BOCC governance and TOR review

- With the BOCC playing an important role in the Sector Response Framework (SRF), UK Finance is undertaking a governance review of its terms of reference, governance and membership.
- Rod Ives, chair of the BOCC since its inception in 2017, advised that he was vacating the chair at the conclusion of his term and as per the terms of reference. The chair is now open for nominations, and persons wishing to be considered for nomination are encouraged to put themselves forward to Daisy (interested parties are asked to provide a brief summary of their background and suitability for the position). UK Finance will be in contact with the committee in due course as to next steps, **ACTION**.
- As chair. Rod has supported the committee in a number of ways and has contributed fully both in his capacity as Chair and as a member of the committee. Members and UK Finance thank Rod for his active and ongoing contribution to the sector.

4. AOB

- UK Finance updated the committee on the exercise to collate the key worker data, which asked firms to provide numbers of staff who have customer-facing roles. This was in response to a request from HMT, who shared that whilst there had been no agreement to change the current vaccination prioritisation framework, government were speaking about those key workers who may be in scope. Thank you to all those who provided this data, and we will be advising HMT and other government bodies in the coming days as to the findings.

Thank you,