

Competition & Markets Authority paper on post-crisis recovery

The Institute for Public Policy Research has published a paper by CMA Chairman Andrew Tyrie, discussing how competition policy can contribute to a robust and sustainable post-crisis recovery.

The 38-page report, entitled [How should competition policy react to coronavirus?](#) explores the short- and long-term consequences of the coronavirus pandemic for markets and competition.

New regulation gives Covid-response powers to local authorities

The Government has published [guidance on Local authority powers to impose restrictions under coronavirus regulations](#), outlining:

- what the new regulations allow local authorities to do and how they should exercise those powers
- how those powers should be enforced
- guidance for those affected by local authority directions

New regulations, which came into effect on 18 July, include powers for local authorities to:

- restrict access to, or close, individual premises
- prohibit certain events (or types of event) from taking place
- restrict access to, or close, public outdoor places (or types of outdoor public places)

The Government hopes that the [new powers and framework](#) will help to contain Covid-19 locally.

Motor vehicle usage edges towards pre-pandemic levels

The Department for Transport's [weekly transport usage statistics](#) show that motor vehicles continue to be the mode of choice for travellers.

Motor vehicle usage during the past week is reported to be at 88% of pre-pandemic levels, climbing up to 98% at weekends, as more people take to the roads following the easing of restrictions.

In contrast, National rail figures continue to remain low at around 18% of pre-pandemic usage levels, peaking at 22% at weekends.

Employers must adhere to Covid secure guidance

For now, people who can work from home should continue to do so. From 1 August, it will be at the discretion of employers as to how staff can continue working safely.

Employers should decide, in consultation with their employees, whether it is viable for them to continue working from home. Where it is decided that workers should come into their place of work then this will need to be reflected in the risk assessment and actions taken to manage the risks of transmission in line with [COVID-19 Secure guidelines](#).

Collecting customer and visitor data for NHS Test and Trace

The Government has updated its [guidance on NHS Test and Trace service in the workplace](#) to include a new section on collecting customer and visitor data.

Businesses are being asked to keep a temporary record of your customers and visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your business to assist the NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed.

In addition, the following information has been added to the section headed 'If a worker develops symptoms and orders a test':

- Where an interaction between 2 people has taken place through a Perspex (or equivalent) screen, this would not be considered sufficient contact.
- Contact tracers will not consider the wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE) as a mitigation when assessing whether a recent contact is likely to have risked transmitting the virus.

Business events can resume in October

The Government has [announced that business events and conferences](#) will be permitted to resume from 1 October provided that social distancing can be adhered to and the rates of infection remain at current levels.

The BVRLA does not anticipate a return to face-to-face conferences and events for the remainder of 2020 and will continue to host member engagement opportunities online.

More jobs furloughed across the UK in the past week

The latest [weekly statistics from the HMRC](#) show that although the number of firms using the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme remains the same at 1.2 million, the number of jobs being furloughed has increased in the past week from 9.4m to 9.5m.

The number of claimants of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme has remained unchanged for the past three weeks, remaining at 2.7m claims.

Applications for Government loans continue to rise

[HM Treasury statistics](#) show that a further 37,361 companies have applied for the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme, Bounce Back Loan Scheme or the Future Fund Scheme during the past week.

The Bounce Back Loan Scheme continues to be the most popular scheme for businesses, with 34,331 firms submitting applications in the last seven days.

Of the 1,316,970 applicants to date, 1,084,153 Bounce Back Loan facilities have been approved, costing £32.79bn.