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Witness Name: Sarah Munby

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THE INDEPENDENT UK COVID-19 INQUIRY

**CORPORATE WITNESS STATEMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS,
ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY
FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF SARAH MUNBY**

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1.

2. Section 1: Introduction

3.

- 1.1. I, Sarah Munby, make this statement on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (**BEIS**) (or '**the Department**').
- 1.2. I am providing this written statement in response to the Inquiry's Rule 9 request dated 7 October 2022 (the '**Rule 9 request**').
- 1.3. I was employed by the Department as Permanent Secretary from 20 July 2020 until 7 February 2023. I had overall responsibility for the effective running of the Department, in addition to my responsibilities as Accounting Officer.
- 1.4. The Inquiry has asked the Department to respond to a series of requests for information, which principally concern the core political and administrative decision making by His Majesty's Government and materials relevant to such decisions, insofar as they are held by BEIS. The Inquiry has defined core political and administrative decision making as those decisions which were taken by the Prime Minister / No 10, the Cabinet Committees (including Ministerial Implementation Groups (**MIGs**)) and the Lead Government Departments (**LGDs**).
- 1.5. I recognise the importance of this Inquiry and the serious nature of the impacts of Covid-19 which it seeks to investigate. I am acutely aware from my personal work during the pandemic of the serious consequences which the virus and consequent restrictions had both for individuals and their families in relation to the health impacts, and on businesses and livelihoods across the UK.
- 1.6. In preparing this statement, I am reliant upon the work of the Department's Inquiry response unit. My officials have coordinated and liaised with a number of colleagues with relevant knowledge and experience across the Department. Their contributions have been used for the purposes of preparing this statement. My statement therefore relies upon those contributions. I am reliant on a review of contemporaneous written material conducted by colleagues. In this statement I have made clear where I have put forward my personal reflections. For the most part, however, this is a 'corporate' statement in the sense that – to meet the understandably broad nature of the Inquiry's request – I have drawn and relied upon extensive input from relevant colleagues.
- 1.7. As the Inquiry is aware following a letter of 2 November 2022 from NR our recognised legal representative within the Government Legal Department, the documents I have relied upon for this statement and accompanying chronology have

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been identified from BEIS' IT systems (Sharepoint). At the time of drafting this statement, the Department was still in the process of undertaking a full document review, which included further searches across email repositories. For the purposes of this statement, I have therefore relied primarily upon documents including briefings and submissions rather than email records. The Department's Inquiry response unit will continue to work with the Inquiry on the disclosure of email records.

- 1.8. Colleagues and I have done our best to assist the Inquiry on behalf of the Department drawing upon documents. If further material is made available, I would be happy to add to or clarify this statement to take it into account.

Structure of this Statement

- 1.9 In section 2, I briefly introduce the chronology that the Department was asked to complete as part of the Rule 9 response. This chronology contains a detailed list of the various events and key decision making in which BEIS was involved from 1 January 2020 to 24 February 2022.
- 1.10 In Sections 3 - 16, I address the particular topics that the Inquiry has asked BEIS to consider. I have also included within that section details on other particular topics which go to the role BEIS played in HM Government's response to the pandemic. The topics include:
 - A summary of BEIS' role, function and responsibilities prior to and during the pandemic, including BEIS' internal Governance and ways of working in relation to an emergency response.
 - A summary of the various Cabinet Committees and meetings, as well as other ministerial groups.
 - A summary of the key BEIS Ministers for the period 1 January 2020 to 24 February 2022.
 - A summary of the areas of government policy in which BEIS had exclusive responsibility and shared competence during 1 January 2022 until 24 February 2022.
 - BEIS' initial response to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and BEIS' initial support for various business sectors.
 - A description of the role BEIS played in key decision making relating to the imposition of non-pharmaceutical interventions (**NPIs**).

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- A description of BEIS' role in the provision of advice and key decision making on the government's initial strategies on community testing, surveillance and guidance and advice to health and social care providers.
 - BEIS' role in delivery of workplace testing.
 - BEIS' role within the vaccine task force (**VTF**).
 - BEIS' role in the Work from Home (**WFH**) policy.
 - BEIS' role in the production of the Working Safely during Coronavirus guidance.
 - BEIS' role in the 'Roadmap to Recovery'.
 - BEIS' role in the production of the Autumn and Winter Plan 2021 Guidance Updates.
 - BEIS' role and responsibilities in the Ventilation Working Group.
 - BEIS' role in the consultation on Covid-19 Certification.
 - BEIS' role in the supply of Personal Protective Equipment (**PPE**) products.
 - The role BEIS had in respect of considerations for vaccination status.
 - BEIS' role in work to consider the differential impacts of Covid-19 on disproportionately impacted groups.
 - The extent of BEIS' interest in the production and dissemination of data modelling.
 - The extent of BEIS' involvement in the provision of advice and briefings on the use of behavioural management, public communication and the maintenance of public confidence in the response to Covid-19.
 - BEIS' involvement in advising on the public health and coronavirus legislation and regulations.
 - BEIS' relationship with Devolved Administrations (**DAs**).
- 1.11 I shall also include in Section 16 a summary of what worked well, and any difficulties or challenges accounted by BEIS officials in supporting core political and administrative decision making.
- 1.12 As there are many acronyms used in this statement, I have included a list of these at Annex K for ease of reference.

A note on key decision makers

- 1.13 The Inquiry has indicated that it wishes to understand the role that BEIS played to support the decision making process between the beginning of January 2020 and 24 February 2022, with a particular focus on the period 1 January 2020 to 26 March 2020.

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- 1.14 The Ministers within the Department who were most involved in decision making during the pandemic were the respective Secretaries of State The Rt Hon Alok Sharma and The Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng and also Minister Scully. Other Ministers also attended decision making meetings on a rotating basis where responsibility for attendance was delegated by the Secretary of State.
- 1.15 BEIS experienced changes in Ministerial portfolios during the time period specified. I have set out a list of Ministers and their portfolios during the time period covered by the Rule 9 request at Annex D.
- 1.16 My predecessors as Permanent Secretary and I were also involved in official level discussions which supported Ministerial decision making. Where appropriate, this responsibility was delegated to Directors General and Directors within the Department. BEIS officials, in consultation with the Permanent Secretary and/or responsible Directors General, determined the most appropriate official to attend each meeting based upon advice from the Cabinet Office on the appropriate level of seniority, and also subject to the topic under discussion, where responsibility for different aspects of work during the pandemic was spread between Director portfolios within the Department. I have included at Annex E a list of the key officials involved in decision making from the Department.
- 1.17 Alex Chisholm held the post of Permanent Secretary for the Department until 14 April 2020. Sam Beckett was then BEIS' Permanent Secretary until 19 July 2020, before I took up the position.

4. Section 2: Chronology and key materials

- 2.1 The Inquiry has asked for a full chronology of events and key decision making in which BEIS was involved, to include key meetings running from 1 January 2020 to 24 February 2022.
- 2.2 Please refer to Annex B for BEIS' chronology.

Key materials

- 2.3 The Inquiry has asked BEIS to identify and describe any key materials that BEIS holds relating to its involvement in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic between 1 January 2020 and 24 February 2022. Please refer to Annex C.

5. Section 3: Request for a corporate statement

3.1 The Inquiry has asked for a description of BEIS' role, function and responsibilities prior to the pandemic:

- (a) within UK government overall; and
- (b) for emergency response measures including managing pandemics.

3.2 The Inquiry has also asked for a description of BEIS' role, function and responsibilities between 1 January 2020 and 24 February 2022:

- (a) within the UK government overall, and with DAs and regional and local administrations; and
- (b) for emergency response measures taken in relation to Covid-19.

3.3 I address these points in this section of the statement. I have divided this section into pre-pandemic and the time period during the pandemic.

BEIS' role, function and responsibilities prior to the pandemic

3.4 In this section, I will explain BEIS' involvement in response to emergency response measures. I will also explain BEIS' wider function and responsibilities with respect to business sectors.

BEIS - Involvement in Emergency Response

3.5 BEIS is a ministerial government Department. The Department was created on 14 July 2016 through a machinery of government (**MoG**) change¹, and following the merger of the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (**BIS**) and Department of Energy and Climate Change (**DECC**). BEIS is responsible for government policy in the following areas: business; industrial strategy; science, research and innovation; energy and clean growth; and climate change.

3.6 BEIS is one of several government departments that have responsibility for leading the government's response to a national emergency affecting one of the UK's Critical National Infrastructures ('**CNI**'). CNI sectors are critical elements of infrastructure (namely assets, facilities, systems, networks, processes and the essential workers that operate and facilitate them), the loss or compromise of which could result in:

- (a) major detrimental impact on the availability, integrity or delivery of essential services – including those services whose integrity, if compromised, could

¹ A MOG change typically refers to the transfer of the functions of one ministerial Department to another, this might occur, as was the case for BEIS in 2016, where the functions of two Departments are merged to form a new Department.

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result in significant loss of life or casualties – taking into account significant economic or social impacts; and/or

- (b) a significant impact on national security, national defence or the functioning of the state.
- 3.7 There are thirteen CNI sectors in the UK. Of these, BEIS has responsibility for the following sectors: energy, civil nuclear, chemicals, space and postal services.
- 3.8 In the event of an emergency, Cabinet Office expect the allocated LGD for any given sector to lead a cross-government response. The Cabinet Office could also ask a department's Secretary of State to chair COBR meetings, which are held in the Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms (and therefore referred to as 'COBR' meetings). The purpose of these meetings is to coordinate and discuss response to matters of national, regional or international significance, of which the coronavirus response was one.
- 3.9 There are also instances where BEIS would be involved in the cross-government response to an emergency which had significant impact on its sectors, but it may not necessarily have been the lead government department. For example, in July 2021, BEIS was involved in the response to severe weather events such as flooding. BEIS officials supported the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (**Defra**) in its response to Storm Christophe in January 2021. As part of that response, BEIS officials provided updates on energy, civil nuclear and severe weather plans and impacts. As part of recovery efforts, BEIS officials also supported the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (**MHCLG**). BEIS provided funding to local authorities to run local grant schemes to support flooded businesses.

BEIS Internal Governance and Ways of Working in relation to Emergency Response

- 3.10 At its creation in July 2016, BEIS established an Executive Committee (otherwise known as '**ExCo**'), to oversee internal governance within the Department. ExCo is ultimately responsible for emergency response and resilience within BEIS. During the early stages of the pandemic, ExCo met twice daily, and then weekly from September 2020. ExCo currently meets on a monthly basis.
- 3.11 BEIS ExCo is usually chaired by the Permanent Secretary who, in 2020 prior to the pandemic, was Alex Chisholm. In the Permanent Secretary's absence, a Director General (**DG**) has delegated responsibility to chair ExCo meetings. For a full list of ExCo members who attended meetings between May 2019 and October 2022, please refer to SM/1, INQ000065321.

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- 3.12 The BEIS approach to emergency response has evolved over time as the Department has sought to improve our ways of working. I have set out details of this below.
- 3.13 Following the creation of BEIS, an internal review was held in June 2017 and recommendations made to ExCo to further improve BEIS emergency response capability. The review found that there were areas of good practice within the Department, for example the energy sector response. The review also found that more work was needed to improve emergency response and standardise it across the Department. Specifically, it found that “...*the current approach does not formally make best use of this expertise in a proactive manner, rather it relies on a small pool of staff to share expertise in a reactive fashion. A single approach to managing these emergencies ensures consistent outcomes, and a managed and coordinated structure that can be nuanced to the specific requirements and outputs within a broader framework.*” (SM/1a, INQ000148242).
- 3.14 BEIS took steps to implement the recommendations which had been proposed. In July 2017, the Department established a single emergency response team (the ‘Emergency Response – Capabilities and Operations team’, or ‘**ERCO**’). ERCO is a sub-team of the ‘Energy Resilience and Emergency Response’, team or ‘**ER2**’, which formed when BIS merged with DECC. From 2017 to the present day ER2/ERCO led the coordination of BEIS’ immediate response to emergencies. ER2/ERCO is responsible for working with teams across BEIS to ensure that they are well prepared for an emergency.
- 3.15 ER2 / ERCO had (and continue to have) the following responsibilities in an emergency faced by the Department:
- (a) Coordinating and training a network of people within the Department who would be called upon to assist with an emergency response. This network is called the Emergency Response Group. It is a pool of trained staff managed by ER2 who could be released from their current duties and called upon to support responses at short notice, if needed. Their duties in an emergency response would include the maintenance of an Emergency Operations Centre (**EOC**). The operation of an EOC allows staff involved in a response to gather in a dedicated, secure space to coordinate a response to a crisis. BEIS aimed to ensure that it had robust structures and processes in place to respond to an emergency, and staff were appropriately trained.
 - (b) In parallel, the Emergency Response Team (**ERT**), (which is a generic term for a team or structure put in place to deal with an emergency), is responsible for assessing sector preparedness and coordinating a cross government

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response. This team is managed by a 'Gold' level head to whom two 'Silver' level individuals report, each responsible for overseeing business continuity and operations. A 'Gold' head is usually a senior civil servant and is responsible for the management of the emergency that has arisen; they set the strategy for the response. A 'Gold' head may represent the Department at a COBR meeting in support of ministers. A 'Silver' lead oversees the management of the emergency based on the strategy defined by the 'Gold'. They would advise the Gold on the structure and management of the ERT and may deputise for the Gold. However, team structures could change depending on the emergency and the issues faced as part of the management of the transition from response to recovery.

- (c) To identify and monitor risk, BEIS (1) ran exercises to test preparedness for emergencies in the CNIs for which BEIS has responsibility (energy, civil nuclear, chemicals, space, and postal services)²; (2) actively "horizon scanned"³ for potential risk; and (3) liaised with other government departments (**OGDs**) to share potential departmental risks in order to encourage a greater situational awareness and a more proactive approach to crisis management.
- (d) Triaging⁴ commissions from the centre of government (i.e. from No 10. / Cabinet Office) for the policy teams and ensuring briefings were coordinated across multi-functional teams appropriate to the COBR and ministerial audiences.
- (e) Enabling the transition of management of long-term recovery to an appropriate policy team.
- (f) Implementing the above in accordance with central government's concept of operations (**CONOPS**)⁵. BEIS also had its own departmental CONOPS. Each department's concept of operations guidance document sets out its arrangements for responding to and recovering from emergencies.

² Further details of the exercises can be provided but will be addressed in response to the Inquiry's Module 1. For the purpose of brevity I have not included details in the present statement. Some of these records are held at higher levels of security.

³ "Horizon scanning" is used to describe exploring what the future might look like to understand uncertainties better, by systemically investigating evidence about future trends. Horizon scanning helps government analyse whether it is adequately prepared for potential opportunities and threats, in order to ensure policies are resilient to different future environments.

⁴ Triaging is the process of analysing a commission received from the Cabinet Office or No10, for example, and allocating a team within BEIS to respond and prioritise against other commissions received.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-central-government-s-concept-of-operations> (SM/163, INQ000096875)

BEIS' wider function and responsibilities with respect to business sectors

- 3.16 Both prior to and during the pandemic BEIS also had responsibility for the majority of wider non-CNI business sectors in government. At the time of writing in 2022, these include but are not limited to: automotive, manufacturing, construction, steel, hospitality, retail, personal care and professional and business services. BEIS has an interest in the food retail sector sponsored by Defra and in supply chain logistics, which is an area shared between departments, including the Department for Transport (**DfT**). The Department often liaises with those departments on support for these sectors.
- 3.17 BEIS also has responsibility within government for the legal framework of employment rights and employer responsibilities which underpin the labour market in Great Britain, including the enforcement of those rights in certain key areas (e.g. payment of the National Living Wage). As part of this responsibility, BEIS officials work closely with both Trade Unions and employer representatives, including during the pandemic, to understand the 'real world' issues related to rights in the workplace. BEIS officials used this feedback in discussions during the pandemic with Cabinet Office, No.10 and HM Treasury (**HMT**) on policy, considering the perspectives of workers and employees, including those with protected characteristics, in addition to the perspectives and feedback of employers.
- 3.18 In its policy work during the pandemic, BEIS officials sought to take into account the potential impacts of Covid (and responses to Covid) on groups with protected characteristics and vulnerable groups. This was done both through Public Sector Equality Duty assessments and wider consideration of disproportionate impacts. For example, a list of BEIS Public Sector Equality Duty assessments is exhibited at Annex L, and further details are given throughout this statement where relevant to particular areas within scope of the Rule 9 request. Advice to Ministers, briefings for meetings and submissions often included consideration of equalities impacts.

6. Section 4 - BEIS' role, function and responsibilities between 1 January 2020 and 24 February 2022

- 4.1 As a government department, BEIS continued to have responsibilities for the functions outlined in paragraphs 3.5 – 3.18. Both prior to and during the pandemic BEIS also had responsibility for the majority of wider non-CNI business sectors in government. At the time of writing in 2022, these include but are not limited to: automotive, manufacturing, construction, steel, hospitality, retail, personal care and professional and business services. BEIS has an interest in the food retail sector sponsored by Defra and in supply chain logistics, which is an area shared between departments, including the Department for Transport (**DfT**). The department often liaised with those departments above during the pandemic. I have provided below a short summary of the governance mechanisms, teams and activities that were responsible for coordinating an emergency response within BEIS. As noted above, prior to July 2020 these activities were the responsibility of my predecessors, Alex Chisholm and Sam Beckett (April to July 2020).
- 4.2 From 17 March 2020 and throughout the pandemic, one of the ExCo functions was to oversee BEIS' response and ensure that adequate resources were available to the teams involved in the response. At peak moments (such as in early 2020, and during the second wave in autumn 2020), ExCo received daily briefings and met daily to discuss key issues. At times, the frequency of the meetings reduced subject to need, or urgency. ExCo also delegated specific areas of work, such as staff mobilisation and resource management, to a 'People and Operations Committee'.
- 4.3 In the early stages of the pandemic, BEIS developed specific internal workstreams in response to the pandemic, which included: (i) coordination of policy development and delivery; (ii) ERT; and (iii) people and welfare. For full details of the BEIS Covid-19 response workstreams, please refer to the organogram at SM/2, INQ000064785.
- 4.4 As BEIS' Permanent Secretary in the early stages of the pandemic, until 14 April 2020, Alex Chisholm led the initial coordination of policy development and delivery in response to the pandemic, supported by a Senior Responsible Owner (**SRO**), Joanna Whittington. When a SRO is appointed to a programme or project in the Department, they are accountable for ensuring the programme or project meets its objectives. The SRO is accountable for successful delivery and are recognised throughout the organisation as a key leadership figure in driving the programme or project forward.

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4.5 There were further sub-teams within the Department, with a Director and Deputy Director responsible for implementing policy decisions in their allocated area and feeding back to central government. These included:

- i. business support interventions (e.g. the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (**CBILs**), helpline, local authority grants);
- ii. business engagement and communications;
- iii. business impacts & intelligence;
- iv. company cases;
- v. economic impacts;
- vi. research sector and vaccines;
- vii. workers and consumers’;
- viii. Devolved Administrations engagement, EU and international policy;
- ix. CNI and civil contingency;
- x. energy; and
- xi. people, welfare, corporate services and partner organisations.

4.6 On 19 March 2020, BEIS established a Covid-19 Hub Project Management Office (**PMO**) team to provide daily updates across the Department’s programme. These updates were provided by officials to BEIS ministers, ExCo and to Cabinet Office.

4.7 BEIS’ Covid-19 Coordination Hub was established on 1 April 2020 for the purposes of being a central briefing hub. The Hub, PMO, and the emergency response provided by ERT operated simultaneously to cover different aspects of the response.

4.8 The ERT and the BEIS Covid-19 Coordination Hub were the liaison between BEIS and central government:

- (a) ERT participated in coordination activity through the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat, with a focus on BEIS’ CNI.
- (b) The BEIS Covid-19 Coordination Hub fed into the Cabinet Office Secretariat, with responsibility for policy responses to Covid-19, which could have included areas outside of BEIS’ CNI.

Overall, the coordinated policy effort grew out of the ERT, which managed the early monitoring stages of the pandemic. The responsible DG, Joanna Whittington at that time, took a role in planning and coordination.

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- 4.9 On 21 September 2020, the Covid-19 Coordination Hub was replaced by the Covid-19 Programme Directorate, which then became the liaison between BEIS and central government. The purpose of this was to move the team from a temporary mobilisation of staff to a standing directorate for the duration of the pandemic. This provided stability in resourcing and enabled mobilised staff to return to their home teams. The purpose of the new Directorate was to act as a single centre of expertise and coordination for all matters relating to the pandemic within BEIS.
- 4.10 For organograms showing the structure and make up of these teams from April 2020, please refer to Annex M.

Cabinet committees / meetings

- 4.11 Groups of ministers met during Cabinet and Cabinet Committee meetings, where they took collective decisions. The Cabinet usually met at least once a week to discuss the response to the pandemic. The following Cabinet committees met during the pandemic:
- (a) COBR: COBR meetings are usually chaired by the Prime Minister for the purposes of coordinating a government response to an emergency. If a COBR meeting was held then either the BEIS Secretary of State would have been expected to attend, or delegate to a junior minister.
 - (b) CabSec(O): The Cabinet Secretariat aided the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and its Committees, and worked to ensure coordination across government departments. CabSec(O) meetings would normally be attended by the Permanent Secretary, but over time were delegated to Directors General and Directors with expertise in the topic under discussion.
 - (c) Strategy Committee (Covid-S): this Committee was set up to *“drive the Government’s strategic response to Covid-19, considering the impact of both the virus and [government] response to it, and setting the direction for [government] recovery strategy”* (SM/2a, INQ000065120). Ministerial strategy meetings were referred to as Covid-S(M), whilst officials’ meetings were referred to as Covid-S(O).
 - (d) Operations Committee (Covid-O): this committee was set up in parallel to *“drive delivery and provide assurance on the UK-wide implementation across key lines of operation: Smart Lockdowns, Supply and Capacity, Vaccines and Treatments, a Covid Resilient Economy, Vulnerability”* (SM/2a, INQ000065120). Covid-O meetings attended by ministers were referred to as

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Covid-O(M), whilst officials' meetings were referred to as Covid-O(O). BEIS does not hold details of the terms of reference for this committee, which were the responsibility of Cabinet Office who provided the Secretariat.

Other ministerial groups

4.12 **Small Ministerial Groups (SMGs):** SMGs met on an ad hoc basis as required. For example, SMGs oversaw guidance created on Working Safely via five taskforces. BEIS was responsible for two of these taskforces, as outlined below, and an example of a Chair's brief is at SM/3, INQ000064843. Details are set out at paragraph 10.52 below.

4.13 **Implementation Groups:** On 13 March 2020, the Prime Minister requested the establishment of four new implementation committees. These Committees fed into the Prime Minister's daily Covid-19 meetings. The meetings would usually be attended by the Secretary of State. These included:

- **Health and Social Care Ministerial Implementation Group (HSCMIG):** HSCMIG was chaired by the Health Secretary to focus on the preparedness of the National Health Service (NHS) and the medical and social package of support.
- **General Public Sector Ministerial Implementation Group (GPSMIG):** GPSMIG was chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to look at preparedness across the public and CNI, excluding the NHS.
- **Economic and Business Response Ministerial Implementation Group (EBRMIG):** EBRMIG was chaired by the Chancellor. The Business Secretary was deputy chair. EBRMIG reported on the business implications of Covid-19 to the Prime Minister. EBRMIG had two functions: 1) to ensure rapid communication and engagement with business; and 2) to monitor and respond to the implications of key sectors and businesses. As part of this work, BEIS provided information about strategically important vulnerable businesses and potential support measures in order to support No 10 and HMT decision making. EBRMIG also coordinated ministerial roundtable meetings with key sectors.
- **International Ministerial Implementation Group (IMIG):** IMIG was chaired by the Foreign Secretary. IMIG considered the international response to the pandemic.

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Section 5 – Key Officials and decision makers

- 5.1 The Inquiry has asked for details of those considered to be key officials or decision makers within BEIS, and their involvement in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic between 1 January 2020 and 24 February 2022.

Ministers

- 5.2 As noted above, the key BEIS Ministers involved in decision making during the pandemic were the respective Secretaries of State and Minister Scully. These Ministers attended the majority of decision making meetings.

Secretaries of State

- 5.3 Between 1 January 2020 and 24 February 2022, those who held the office of Secretary of State for BEIS were the Rt. Hon Andrea Leadsom (July 2019 - February 2020), the Rt. Hon Alok Sharma (February 2020 – January 2021) and the Rt Hon. Kwasi Kwarteng (January 2021 – September 2022).
- 5.4 The Secretary of State has overall responsibility for BEIS. This includes leading government strategy on business, ensuring the country has secure energy supplies and ensuring the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation.

Ministers of State

Ministers for Business Energy and Clean Growth and Climate Change

- 5.5 Between 1 January 2020 and 24 February 2022, the Ministers of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth and Climate Change were Minister Kwarteng, Minister Trevelyan and Minister Hands.
- 5.6 Their responsibilities are delegated from the relevant Secretary of State and include net zero strategy, carbon budgets, low carbon generation, energy retail markets, oil and gas, security of supply, electricity and gas wholesale markets and networks, international energy, climate change and climate finance, energy security, hydrogen, nuclear, fusion, and industrial decarbonisation.

Minister of State for Investment

- 5.7 Between March 2020 and July 2022, the Minister of State for Investment was Lord Grimstone of Boscobel jointly with the Department for International Trade.

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- 5.8 The responsibilities are delegated from the relevant Secretary of State and include encouraging economic growth and a green industrial revolution through attracting and retaining inward investment.

Parliamentary Under Secretaries of State

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility)

- 5.9 Between July 2018 and February 2020, the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility was Minister Tolhurst.
- 5.10 Their responsibilities are delegated from the relevant Secretary of State and include small business and enterprise, consumer and competition (including energy retail markets and competition law), labour markets.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets)

- 5.11 Between February 2020 and 24 February 2022, the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets was Minister Scully.
- 5.12 Their responsibilities are delegated from the relevant Secretary of State and include industrial strategy, Britain's exit from the European Trade Unions, small business and enterprise, consumer and competition (including energy retail markets and competition law), labour markets and European Trade Unions structural funds.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Business and Industry)

- 5.13 Between 1 January 2020 and 24 February 2022, the Parliamentary Under Secretaries of State (Minister for Business and Industry) were Minister Zahawi and Lee Rowley. Between 28 November 2020 and 15 September 2021 Minister Zahawi was also the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Covid Vaccine Deployment) at the Department for Health and Social Care (**DHSC**).
- 5.14 Their responsibilities are delegated from the relevant Secretary of State and include small business, enterprise and access to finance, internal market implementation and trade, subsidy control, consumer and competition, labour markets, postal affairs, retail, hospitality, regional growth, economic shocks, devolved administrations and secondary legislation.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Science, Research and Innovation)

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- 5.15 Between February 2020 and 24 February 2022, the Parliamentary Under Secretaries of State (Minister for Science, Research and Innovation) were Amanda Solloway MP and George Freeman MP.
- 5.16 Their responsibilities are delegated from the relevant Secretary of State and include science and research, space, intellectual property and life sciences.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Climate Change)

- 5.17 Between July 2019 and February 2020, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Climate Change) was Lord Duncan of Springbank.
- 5.18 Their responsibilities are delegated from the relevant Secretary of State and included clean heat and international climate change.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Business, Energy and Corporate Responsibility)

- 5.19 Between February 2020 and 24 February 2022, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Climate Change) was Lord Callanan.
- 5.20 Their responsibilities are delegated from the relevant Secretary of State and include Lords lead on all BEIS business, company law, corporate governance and responsibility, devolved administrations and energy efficiency.

Officials

- 5.21 I became BEIS' Permanent Secretary on 20 July 2020. Alex Chisholm held this post before me, between 5 September 2016 and 14 April 2020. Sam Beckett temporarily held the post between the departure of Alex Chisholm and my appointment.
- 5.22 A number of officials participated in collective discussions at Covid-O(O) meetings, and then the recommendations from Covid-O were taken to the ministerial decision making meetings. For a list of key officials and their respective roles, please refer to the organogram at SM/2, INQ000064785 and the list at Annex E.

Special Advisers

- 5.23 BEIS Special Advisers supported officials in giving views before advice and briefing was put to Ministers but did not usually attend decision making meetings. BEIS Special Advisers also liaised with counterparts in No.10 and other key departments to discuss matters of policy on an ad hoc basis, and to discuss political matters. A list of Special Advisers between 2020 and 2022 is included at Annex E.

11. Section 6 - Areas of exclusive responsibility and shared competence

6.1 The Inquiry has asked for an explanation of the areas of government policy in which BEIS had:

- (a) exclusive responsibility; and
- (b) shared competence during 1 January 2022 until 24 February 2022.

Exclusive Responsibility

Research and Innovation Policy

6.2 In relation to areas where BEIS had “exclusive” responsibility, BEIS’ normal areas of responsibility included providing support to research and innovation institutions. Where these had difficulty during the pandemic, BEIS had exclusive responsibility for supporting them and ensuring that their work could continue.

6.3 Accordingly, BEIS led on providing support to research and innovation institutions throughout the pandemic. In this respect, it was BEIS’ objective to ensure that research could continue during the pandemic, through the BEIS funded non-departmental government body UK Research and Innovation (**UKRI**)

6.4 This work was distinct to other research in response to the pandemic, such as vaccines. The VTF is addressed later in this statement at paragraph 10.33 to 10.44.

Shared Competence

6.5 As detailed further below, BEIS shared responsibility with OGDs in several areas concerned with the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The main areas of shared responsibility can be summarised as follows:

- (a) Delivery of economic support, such as Covid-19 Grants and loans: HMT took decisions on the design of support measures and BEIS subsequently delivered these. BEIS contributed to discussions with HMT about the design of the support, but decisions were a matter for HMT Ministers. BEIS Secretary of State was accountable for the delivery of the schemes.
- (b) “Contain” and “Test and Trace”: these were DHSC led initiatives, but into which BEIS had input (for example, BEIS was involved in stakeholder management to encourage businesses to support these initiatives so that these would be successful).

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- (c) Delivery of the 'Covid-secure' or 'Working Safely' guidance⁶: This guidance was first initiated and led from within BEIS at the request of the Chancellor. Cabinet Office later took on a coordination role and increasingly set the policy direction for guidance. BEIS then reflected this in guidance for BEIS sectors, along with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (**DCMS**) (for leisure sectors) and DHSC (for health sectors).
- 6.6 PPE: DHSC led on procurement of PPE. BEIS supported DHSC by undertaking a time-limited project to help set up a domestic supply chain for PPE products. BEIS had no involvement in PPE procurement but was involved in the regulation of PPE through the Office for Product Safety and Standards (**OPSS**). BEIS / OPSS also provided operational and technical support on PPE.

Office for Product Safety and Standards

- 6.7 OPSS was created in January 2018 to deliver consumer protection and to support business confidence, productivity and growth⁷. OPSS is a separate unit within BEIS. During the pandemic, OPSS had responsibility for:
- (a) PPE standards (see paragraph 10.132 for details);
 - (b) Compliance and technical advice on a range of other Covid-19 related products during the pandemic: including issuing guidance on the regulatory requirements for face coverings and hand sanitiser, advising DHSC and Cabinet Office on the compliance and technical assessment of air purifiers and of UV-C devices;
 - (c) Working directly with MHCLG (later the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (**DLUHC**)) on advising on suitable enforcement mechanisms for the Business Closures Regulations in England drawing on knowledge of Local Authority Regulators and responsibility for Primary Authority.

⁶ To note that the title of this guidance changed during the pandemic. In 2020 this was referred to as the 'Safer Working' guidance. From late 2020/early 2021 it was renamed the 'Working Safely' guidance. In the body of this statement I have referred consistently to 'Working Safely' guidance for clarity. In the table at Annex H listing guidance updates and in the exhibits, 'Safer Working' also appears. For the avoidance of doubt both terms refer to the same guidance.

⁷ OPSS regulates a wide range of products with a focus on their safety and integrity. OPSS work with local, National and international regulators, with consumer representatives and with businesses to deliver effective protections and to support compliance. OPSS is: the National regulator for all consumer products, except for vehicles, medicines and food; and the National regulator for legal metrology, ensuring weighing and measuring instruments are accurate and reliable.

12. Section 7 - Initial response and first national Lockdown (January 2020 – March 2020)

7.1 The Inquiry has asked that this statement focus on the period from the beginning of January 2020 to 26 March 2020, when the first UK lockdown came into effect.

7.2 In the period specified, I was DG for Business Sectors and had some involvement in the early response in this capacity. However, to explain BEIS' role and involvement in the initial response I have relied upon the recollections of key officials who were working in BEIS Private Office in March 2020, and other officials involved in the early days of BEIS' response.

7.3 Between January 2020 and March 2020, due to the pace of the initial response, I understand that much of the work in this early period was carried out through verbal discussions and email.⁸ I also understand that BEIS records are less complete for this period than for later times within scope of this module.

7.4 I understand that based upon initial limited searches and discussions with key officials, BEIS has relatively limited records relating to Covid-19 prior to March 2020 (i.e. before Cabinet Office and formal reporting and governance structures were set up) However, key documents from this period have been included in the chronology, at Annex B, which include:

- (a) Briefing for BEIS Secretary of State attendance at COBR(M) chaired by the Health Secretary 26 February 2020, at SM/4, INQ000064988.
- (b) An example of a BEIS Situation Report (otherwise referred to as 'SitRep'). From 29/01/2020 BEIS' officials updated ministers by providing daily SitReps
- (c) Extracts from Private Office email records from March 2020, which related to the first lockdown, at SM/5, INQ000065294, SM/5a, INQ000065300, SM/5b, INQ000065298, SM/5c, INQ000065299, SM/5d, INQ000065301, SM/5e, INQ000065290 and SM/5f, INQ000065296.

First National Lockdown

7.5 In the early days of the pandemic, BEIS was involved in discussions with the centre about specific areas relating to the potential impact of the pandemic on businesses, workers and the wider economy. In relation to business and economic support, the Chancellor and Business Secretary reported back to No. 10 through EBRMIG, which is explained in paragraph 4.13 above.

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- 7.6 To the best recollection of officials, key decisions, particularly the decision to move to the first national lock down were taken by No.10 and Cabinet Office without significant involvement from BEIS officials, or for the most part BEIS Ministers.
- 7.7 From the perspective of those working at the time I understand that a stage was reached in the week commencing 16 March 2020 where key decisions were taken by No.10 and the Cabinet Office. My personal recollection is that this mirrored the urgency of the situation, in which the need to take decisions swiftly meant that the normal structures of officials in each Department being consulted and advising their own Secretaries of State on how to participate in cross-Cabinet debates were (probably necessarily) not operating in the "business as usual" way. I have not consulted former Secretary of State Rt Hon Alok Sharma on this matter.
- 7.8 In March 2020, prior to the first national lockdown (see Annex F for detail on restrictions imposed), in the recollection of BEIS Private Office officials, BEIS ministers and officials were involved in discussions through COBR. BEIS officials also participated in CABSEC-O meetings chaired by the Cabinet Secretary. Both the COBR and CABSEC-O meetings discussed a range of mitigation measures, and BEIS officials were asked to provide views on the best way to restrict the spread of the virus by potentially closing businesses in the London area.
- 7.9 At this time, Government was receiving many offers of help and support from the business community, and BEIS was asked by No.10 on 18 March 2020 to help triage and respond to these.
- 7.10 A trilateral discussion was planned for the week commencing 16 March 2020 between the Business Secretary, PM and Chancellor to discuss the economic response to the pandemic and best way to approach support to sectors, building upon discussions at the EBRMIG committee. However, by 20 March 2020, events had overtaken these initial discussions that BEIS had participated in, and Cabinet Office/No.10 took the decision to impose a national stay at home order.
- 7.11 BEIS officials received notification from Cabinet Office on Monday, 23 March 2020 at 12:22 of the intention to impose more stringent measures to increase social distancing across the country, including a stay at home order. BEIS' Secretary of State, Rt Hon Alok Sharma, then attended a COBR meeting on 23 March to discuss the lockdown.
- 7.12 BEIS' involvement in the implementation of NPIs and subsequent guidance are detailed further below in this statement at section 9.

13. Section 8 - BEIS initial support for CNI and wider business sectors

- 8.1 This sub-section provides a high-level summary of the initial steps taken by BEIS to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 within the Department's areas of interest. These included both CNI sectors for which BEIS had responsibility as set out above under paragraph 3.7 and wider business sectors.
- 8.2 On 27 February 2020, the Secretary of State, Rt Hon Alok Sharma, was briefed following his request to BEIS' officials for a draft letter to the Prime Minister on the current scale of the Covid-19 pandemic and the possible risk to business. The brief produced covered BEIS areas and responsibilities, including its CNI, industry and supply chains, labour markets, consumers' and science. BEIS staff recall that the letter and attached briefing were not sent to the Prime Minister as the situation was changing very quickly and the events detailed further below overtook matters.
- 8.3 In summary, the briefing stated that:
- (a) Maintaining CNI essential services was a priority.
 - (b) BEIS was working with Energy, Civil Nuclear, Chemicals, Post and Space sectors to implement the DHSC Pandemic Influenza Strategy established in 2011.
 - (c) Significant work was ongoing to support wider cross-government efforts led by the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat.
 - (d) BEIS was gathering further intelligence on industry responses and potential government interventions, in collaboration with HMT, Department for International Trade and CO, to coordinate sharing of intelligence and analysis on Covid-19 impacts.
 - (e) Covid-19 was expected to have a significant short-term impact on the economy.
 - (f) There were recognised pressures in supply, demand and cashflow across businesses.
 - (g) In the event of a severe outbreak, ensuring maximum resilience in the health and social care systems would be a top priority and it would be important to leverage the contribution employers from other sectors may be able to make.
 - (h) The main potential risks to the science base were expected to be largely related to the research workforce in universities and research institutions.

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BEIS planned to work with Universities UK and the Department for Education (DfE) to examine the risks posed to universities.

- 8.4 On 13 March 2020, following the publication of the 'Stay at Home' guidance by Public Health England (PHE), the Secretary of State, Rt Hon Alok Sharma, was advised by officials that sector teams including the energy sub sector and chemicals sector teams (details at SM/6, INQ000065987) within BEIS had engaged with CNI operators for five weeks to assess the status of their pandemic influenza plans. The primary objective of pandemic influenza planning was to ensure the continuity of critical services and minimise disruption wherever possible. Operators in CNI sectors assured BEIS that they had previously developed plans using reasonable worst case planning assumptions⁹.
- 8.5 There was concern amongst CNI operators about the potential impact of NPIs such as self-isolation, given that increased staff absenteeism would have impacted on their ability to operate essential services. For example, whole household isolation compared with self-isolation was of particular concern, as this would have inevitably impacted on staff presence in the workplace and was expected to lead to disruption.
- 8.6 BEIS therefore sought to adopt a pragmatic approach wherever possible. The Department agreed and kept mitigations applicable to CNI sector workers under review, given the potential for a significant negative impact on service supply. BEIS continued to monitor staff absences in CNI sectors and disruption to essential energy and chemicals supply services and held roundtable meetings with businesses on their areas of concern.

Hospitality

- 8.7 BEIS also created a designated team focused on the hospitality sector, which was established on 18 March 2020. BEIS' Hospitality Team worked with DCMS to support this sector throughout the pandemic. The details of this are at SM/7, INQ000064742.
- 8.8 The new hospitality team was tasked with disseminating key information to businesses in the hospitality sector to help them: (1) access the various government support packages; (2) remain financially solvent; and (3) keep as many of their staff employed as possible.
- 8.9 BEIS' Hospitality Team organised a number of ministerial and roundtable meetings with businesses throughout the pandemic. These were focused on reviewing the

⁹ Further details can be provided.

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impact of the continually evolving guidance on businesses and also the level of compliance by businesses.

- 8.10 Regular meetings took place between BEIS officials and the hospitality sector. For example, the Hospitality Futures Group met on nearly a weekly basis and was a useful source of intelligence about how pubs and restaurants were coping during the pandemic, as well as providing a conduit for this sector to feedback to Government. BEIS officials used this information as the basis for advice to ministers and in discussions with OGDs. One example relates to the issue of unpaid commercial rent, which was highlighted strongly during these discussions (as well as with the retail sector, as below). BEIS' engagement with sectors and with DLUHC led to extensions to the moratorium for commercial rent and to the introduction of the Commercial Rent (Coronavirus) Act 2022, which put in place an arbitration system to help address rent debt that had been built up during the periods of business closure.

Retail

- 8.11 BEIS' Retail Team was established before the pandemic. It had already established constructive relationships and engagement both in the sector and across Whitehall, but there was a need for this to increase during the pandemic. One of the team's primary objectives was to ensure it supported Lead Government Departments in sharing summaries of stakeholder feedback through to the centre, and back out. On 2 March 2020, the Team reprioritised its resources (and secured temporary additional resource) to respond to the immediate impact of Covid-19.
- 8.12 BEIS' Retail Team contributed to policy discussions across government, with Cabinet Office, Defra, DHSC and PHE. It engaged with businesses in the sector to gain feedback which contributed to the implementation and development of guidance – such as the Working Safely guidance, and the use of face coverings.
- 8.13 The team held regular discussions with representatives from across the sector. From early April 2020, the team facilitated regular ministerial discussions with large groups of senior stakeholders from non-food sectors. Initially these were held weekly. BEIS liaised with other interested parties, including the Trade Unions of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, and hosted meetings between retailers, Local Authorities and DLUHC colleagues ahead of the sector reopening (e.g. in November 2020 and for subsequent reopening). Defra was the lead department for food supply chain issues. In response to broader retail business impacts the BEIS ministerial group was expanded to include the food retail sector. The minister-chaired retail sector meetings gradually moved to a monthly basis in response to the easing of restrictions.

Other business support

- 8.14 Following the announcement of the first lockdown in March 2020, BEIS created a business support website, intended to be a 'one-stop shop' for coronavirus business advice. The Coronavirus Business Support Hub was launched on the GOV.UK website on 7 April 2020.
- 8.15 More widely, BEIS launched a business support campaign which spanned the duration of the pandemic. The aim was to help businesses and their employees through an unprecedented period of disruption, and provide information on a variety of matters, such as: the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, cash grants, business rates holidays, CBILs, and statutory sick pay relief packages, non-financial regulatory easements (such as the relaxation of competition laws to make it easier for supermarkets to trade etc).
- 8.16 Other business support measures included: the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (**BBLS**), Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme, Future Fund, Restart Grant, Recovery Loan Scheme, Local Authority Grants, Trade Credit Insurance, Corporate Insolvency and Governance Bill, UK Research and Innovation, Research Stabilisation, UKRI, R&I response, Innovate UK's Covid-19 Funding Response Programme, Public Sector Decarbonisation, Green Home Grants and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
- 8.17 I understand that these measures will be the subject of more detailed evidence in a later module, and do not propose to set out further details in this statement.

14. Section 9 - Non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs)

- 9.1 The Inquiry has asked for a description of the role BEIS played in key decision making relating to the imposition of UK-wide and, later, England-wide NPIs, to the extent that BEIS was involved between 1 January 2020 and 24 February 2022.
- 9.2 NPIs included actions that government either mandated or recommended were taken by individuals, businesses and communities to help slow the spread of the virus. These included: self-isolation, hand washing, wearing of face masks, social distancing, shielding, and stay at home orders or "lockdowns"). The Government implemented a number of these measures to contain the spread of the virus. For a brief timeline of the restrictions imposed, please refer to Annex G.

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- 9.3 BEIS modelled the impact of NPIs on its sectors of interest, which included the economic impact. This information was provided regularly to departments including Cabinet Office and HMT, to support their decision making. For further details, please see the section on data modelling below and SM/8, INQ000065196.
- 9.4 Throughout the pandemic, BEIS was also frequently asked by No 10 and Cabinet Office to provide information about the views of business and business representative organisations on the NPIs. For example, BEIS gathered anecdotal information about businesses' experiences of compliance with NPIs, which included challenges faced. This was separate from more formal compliance reporting by businesses, for which the Health and Safety Executive (**HSE**) was responsible. BEIS' specialised sector sponsorship teams, such as the hospitality, retail and construction teams, worked to gather business and stakeholder feedback. This information was then collated by the central Covid-19 coordination team/Directorate in reports which were produced to the centre. This information supported central decision making (for example, on targeted testing, improving ventilation in business settings and on the most appropriate financial support for businesses).
- 9.5 The requirement for first employees and then customers to wear face coverings was an issue on which BEIS worked closely with retailers in order to understand how the NPIs and the existence of the exemptions from that requirement was working in practice. Retailers fed back what workers were experiencing, including challenges from customers' who did not want to wear face coverings (or preferred face shields that were not compliant) that resulted in verbal abuse. There was some confusion about roles and responsibilities in relation to enforcement. For example local authority enforcement officials questioning retailers' enforcement of the provisions, when enforcement of customers wearing face coverings was not the responsibility of the retailer. BEIS shared this feedback with Cabinet Office and participated in work to clarify roles and responsibilities for the enforcement of face coverings in order to mitigate risks to employees. For details of this, please see SM/9, SM/10, SM/11 and SM/12 (INQ000065231, INQ000065230, INQ000064995 and INQ000065064).
- 9.6 BEIS also participated in Covid-O and Covid-S (O) and Covid-O (M) discussions on a range of topics, including NPIs. In these discussions, BEIS represented the views of the business community and workers, to ensure that these were reflected in wider decision making. Throughout the pandemic, BEIS sought to ensure that the impacts on businesses and workers of closure of sectors (for example the risk of staff

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- redundancies, and secondary impacts on mental health) were considered alongside the health impacts of keeping sectors open.
- 9.7 The national lockdowns resulted in the closure of leisure and hospitality sectors, as well as non-essential retail, and the closure of schools, colleges, and universities. BEIS had an interest in all these areas, recognising the interdependencies existing between, for example the closure of schools and the impacts on parents who were also workers and their employers. The Department coordinated with OGDs who led on the delivery of the NPIs in these areas and was predominantly concerned with ensuring the perspectives of business and workers were considered, while working to drive down the rate of transmission.
- 9.8 For the purposes of this statement and following clarification from the Inquiry, I do not propose to set out matters relating to business support or the economic impacts in detail, as I understand that this will be the focus of a later module.

15. Section 10 - Testing, surveillance, and the movement from ‘Contain’ to ‘Delay’

- 10.1 The Inquiry has asked for a description of the role played by BEIS and individuals within BEIS in the provision of advice and key decision making relating to the government’s initial strategies relating to community testing, surveillance, the movement from contain to delay, and guidance and advice to health and social care providers.
- 10.2 By way of background, DHSC established the Covid-19 “Contain” framework to manage outbreaks of coronavirus in local areas through effective prevention and proactive identification of clusters and scaled-up local outbreak management. NHS Test and Trace and Joint Biosecurity Centre worked in partnership with local authorities, PHE and the public at a local level to contain and manage outbreaks.
- 10.3 BEIS officials briefed ministers on proposals to contain, delay and monitor. However, BEIS would not usually have commented on the detail of the public health strategy.
- 10.4 BEIS had a significant interest in the impact of the pandemic on business and workers and the subsequent impact of lockdowns on its CNI, retail, hospitality, personal care and professional services sectors, as well as other sectors impacted such as manufacturing and construction. Many of these industries rely on a workforce that is present on site.

Workplace Testing

- 10.5 The workplace testing (also called ‘mass testing’) programme sought to enable exit from national lockdown more quickly than would otherwise have been possible, by delivering workplace testing in sectors where people could not work from home and which were potentially higher risk.
- 10.6 The mass workplace testing programme was led by NHS Test and Trace. BEIS supported with analysis, sector engagement and deployment to businesses in BEIS sectors.
- 10.7 On 24 April 2020, testing was delivered to essential workers across some of BEIS’ CNI sectors – downstream gas and electricity, downstream oil¹⁰, civil nuclear and Royal Mail.

¹⁰ Downstream gas refers to the natural gas supply network from reception terminal and storage site to consumer isolation valve in the UK. Downstream electricity refers to the electricity supply network from generator to consumer meter in the UK. Downstream oil refers to the supply of oil-based fuels from their production at refineries to their final consumption by end users.

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- 10.8 By May 2020, BEIS was working with NHS Test and Trace to integrate the Test and Trace programme and shielding with its Working Safely guidance work. BEIS also contributed to discussions with No. 10 on the need for clear guidance on Covid-19 secure working, the use of face masks and other PPE, and the level of engagement with businesses.
- 10.9 On 4 November 2020, directors in BEIS considered how they could deploy industry resources to enable large-scale onsite testing and how to provide economic support to participating businesses. Please see more detail at SM/13, INQ000064973. BEIS worked with NHS Test and Trace to develop a list of priority sites for testing and deploy simpler, faster tests that can be used without expertise.
- 10.10 On 9 December 2020, a Covid-O(M) meeting was held. It was agreed that the NHS and Adult Social Care would be designated as a priority for the deployment of testing. The outcome was that further decisions were made on the prioritisation of other sectors, including trialling serial testing in institutional settings such as food factories, universities and schools. BEIS agreed to host a roundtable meeting with business leaders on workplace testing delivery. For further detail, please see SM/14, SM/15, and SM/16 (INQ000066029, INQ000065009 and INQ000065407).
- 10.11 A submission to the Secretary of State, Rt Hon Alok Sharma, was sent on 10 December 2020 (please see SM/18, INQ000065015 and SM/15 INQ000065009), seeking agreement for BEIS to provide further support to DHSC to engage with businesses and Trade Unions.
- 10.12 Following a further Covid-O(M) meeting on 8 January 2021 and the announcement of a further lockdown, it was agreed that hauliers and BEIS' CNI sectors would be prioritised for testing. This followed the general government principle of prioritising CNI as a first priority in an emergency response ahead of other sectors. For example, the need to secure electricity supply was considered a first priority for BEIS over wider economic impacts when prioritising who should receive testing. Please see further detail at SM/19 and SM/20 (INQ000065027 and INQ000065039). On 8 January 2021 the Secretary of State for Transport also announced testing to bolster border measures. The speech can be seen at SM/21, INQ000065426. On this day BEIS also set up a designated employee testing mailbox (C-19 Employee Testing <Employee.Testing@beis.gov.uk>).
- 10.13 Further to this announcement, BEIS officials took part in discussions with Cabinet Office, DHSC and NHS Test and Trace about the most appropriate way to prioritise tests for sectors beyond CNI. To support this prioritisation, BEIS officials carried out a

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review of various business and workplace settings in order to identify those that were most suited to the mass testing pilot.

- 10.14 BEIS officials proposed supporting DHSC's prioritisation of critical workers and those in CNI. Following that, initial analysis suggested that the sectors most likely to benefit from testing included warehouses and certain manufacturing sectors where it was more difficult to reduce workplace contacts, and large events like trade shows. As a result of the analysis undertaken, BEIS officials reached the conclusion that large scale testing could help businesses that rely on the physical presence of workers (such as construction, warehousing and manufacturing) prevent outbreaks and to continue operating despite the higher transmission rates of new variants.
- 10.15 BEIS labour market policy officials recommended to BEIS ministers that employers wishing to test their own staff, or encourage their staff to be tested, would need to consider how this interacted with existing employment rights, which would likely constrain employers ability to require staff to be tested. Given the sensitivities and complexities around this, BEIS worked with DHSC to engage with Trade Unions, as well as business groups, in developing testing proposals.
- 10.16 BEIS officials advised BEIS Ministers about the associated risks, suggesting that it would be disproportionate to impose mandatory testing at an already difficult financial time for business due to the costs involved in providing appropriate facilities and staff time to administer the scheme, which the early DHSC pilots indicated could be considerable. BEIS therefore undertook cost-benefit analysis for DHSC and NHS Test and Trace in order to better understand the costs of and incentives for workplace testing in addition to surveying 147 businesses to understand their views. This can be seen at SM/22, INQ000065288.
- 10.17 On 12 January 2021, phase 1 of the mass testing programme was implemented. Businesses in *critical* sectors which were registered in England and had over 250 employees were required to test their employees. This was initially focused on CNI.
- 10.18 On 20 January 2021, phase 2 of the mass testing programme was implemented. Businesses in *essential* sectors which were registered in England and had over 250 employees were required to test their employees. My officials do not recall any formal definition being given for essential sectors by DHSC, but from discussion with DHSC officials, BEIS officials deemed this to mean other sectors which were critical for the normal functioning of the country, but which were not formally defined as CNI, and reflected this in the sectors which were proposed by BEIS which are set out at the table

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below. The BEIS briefing for a COVID-O meeting on mass testing on 25 January 2021 is at SM/23, INQ000065058.

Table: BEIS proposed sectors for testing

CNI sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Downstream Gas & Electricity• Downstream Oil• Civil Nuclear• Chemicals• Space• Post (i.e. Royal Mail)
Non CNI sectors, with critical workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upstream Oil & Gas, Offshore Renewable• District & Commercial Heat Networks• Medicine and Device Manufacturing• Food Retailers and other “essential” retail• BEIS employees who could not work from home and were conducting critical work, (for example a small number of staff who must be physically located in the BEIS Emergency Operation Centre)• BEIS Arms Lengths Bodies’ critical workers
Other sectors where employees could not work from home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manufacturing: cement, printing, ceramics, aero, auto, consumer goods• Construction• Warehouse and distribution staff for both essential and non-essential retail (including fulfilling online retail orders).• Childcare (led by DfE)• Professional and business services (e.g. vehicle leasing).

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- 10.19 On 28 January 2021, phase 3 of the mass testing programme was implemented. Business in critical and essential sectors, and energy and defence sectors, registered in England with over 50 employees were required to test their employees.
- 10.20 On 1 February 2021, a Covid-O(M) meeting was held. All departments agreed that 75% of eligible employees in each sector for which the Department was responsible would be able to access testing through their employer by 31 March 2021.
- 10.21 Following the Covid-O(M) meeting, mass testing was opened to all sectors, for all companies with over 250 employees on that day. The NHS Test and Trace website became live and all businesses could order tests directly, rather than submitting requests via sponsoring government departments.
- 10.22 On 7 February 2021, mass testing was expanded to all companies with over 50 employees.
- 10.23 The Secretary of State was updated by officials on BEIS' contribution to mass testing by way of a submission (SM/24, INQ000065234) on 16 February 2021, which noted:
- (a) the progress to date and the work underway to support successful implementation of mass testing, including working towards meeting the 75% testing target in BEIS' sectors for those who could not work from home;
 - (b) the issues raised by Business Representative Organisations, and how these were being addressed by BEIS;
 - (c) that DHSC had not ruled out making workplace testing mandatory, and considered including a legal duty on employers to test and on employees to be tested; and agreed
 - (d) to write an open letter to businesses to encourage participation.
- 10.24 As of 15 February 2021, 11,000 companies had registered interest in the free testing scheme via the digital platform built by BEIS.
- 10.25 The Prime Minister announced the roadmap out of lockdown on 22 February 2021¹¹.
- 10.26 On 25 February 2021, the Secretary of State wrote an open letter to businesses encouraging them to test their staff for Covid-19, which was published on the GOV.UK website.
- 10.27 On 4 March 2021, a meeting took place between officials from BEIS and DHSC and representatives from Trade Unions. At the meeting, a number of key areas relevant to

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-on-living-with-covid-21-february-2022> (SM/164, INQ000146514)

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the Working Safely Guidance were discussed with a particular focus on the Asymptomatic Workplace Testing (mass testing) Scheme, which was to be made available to all companies in England, including those with fewer than 50 employees from 6 March 2021. The meeting had a number of aims including to obtain feedback from the Trade Unions on their experiences of workplace testing, discuss what obstacles were preventing more widespread take-up and what steps government could take to increase take-up.

- 10.28 The Trade Unions raised queries and concerns with regards to the scheme including:
- (a) the test, which was considered unreliable being used as an alternative to the Working Safely guidance and isolation;
 - (b) issues that may arise for employers and employees due to the lack of understanding of what a false negative test actually means;
 - (c) clarity on how to deal with third party contractors who were reluctant/refused to test;
 - (d) the need for financial support to be made available for both employer and employees who participate in the scheme;
 - (e) issues with employer non-compliance and the length and complexity of the test and trace guidance.
- 10.29 Following the meeting next steps were agreed with the Trade Unions including sharing the scheme guidance with the Trade Unions, developing a Q&A to share with employers and Trade Unions and for the departments (BEIS & DHSC) to consider the feedback received from the Trade Unions on obstacles to take up and decide what steps they would take to deal with the issues identified. The notes and slides from this meeting can be found at SM/25 INQ000065072, SM/25a INQ000065075 and SM/25b INQ000065076.
- 10.30 On 28 March 2021, the Government made rapid home testing available for all businesses with over 10 employees who could not offer onsite testing. Businesses were required to register their interest by 12 April 2021 to access free tests. By this point, over 60,000 businesses were already registered for regular and rapid tests for employees.

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- 10.31 BEIS worked with Cabinet Office to try to incentivise more employers to register with the rapid home testing scheme. To encourage participation, on 10 May 2021, UKHSA¹² published the 'We Offer Testing to our Staff' – a sticker endorsement scheme for companies taking part. The details of this are at SM/26, INQ000065069. It was considered by UKHSA that the stickers could communicate to consumers' that those businesses care for their employees and the community and show that they are testing their workforce. BEIS does not hold evidence on the impact of the initiative.
- 10.32 Following the launch of the universal testing offer, businesses fed back that there was less demand for a bespoke workplace testing scheme (as employees could more easily access Tests directly), and so over time the scheme was phased out.

Vaccine Task Force

- 10.33 The VTF was set up in April 2020¹³ following a recommendation made by the Government Chief Scientific Adviser, Patrick Vallance in March 2020. The VTF initially sat within the remit of BEIS until 1 August 2021.
- 10.34 The objectives of the VTF were to:
- (a) Secure access to promising Covid-19 vaccines for the UK population as quickly as possible;
 - (b) Make provision for international distribution of vaccines;
 - (c) Strengthen the UK's onshore capacity and capability in vaccine development, manufacturing, and supply chains, to provide resilience for future pandemics.
- 10.35 The VTF had as part of its governance an advisory board made up of leading academics, public health and medical industry experts. The taskforce itself was staffed by a mixture of civil servants, contractors, academics and industry experts. On 16 May 2020 Dame Kate Bingham was appointed as the Chair of the VTF until her departure on 11 December 2020. Clive Dix then acted as interim Chair from 11 December 2020 until June 2021 when Sir Richard Sykes was appointed. Nick Elliott was appointed as DG for the VTF in May 2020 and was in post until December 2020 when he was succeeded by Madelaine McTernan.

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/we-offer-testing-to-our-staff-wottos-endorsement-scheme> (SM/165, INQ000146515)

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-vaccine-taskforce-to-combat-coronavirus> (SM/166, INQ000146516)

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- 10.36 From 1 August 2021, as set out in a Written Ministerial Statement from the Prime Minister, the VTF became a joint unit across BEIS and DHSC¹⁴. A memorandum of understanding split the accountability for the VTF between the two departments; DHSC became accountable for VTF activities where the primary purpose was vaccine procurement or clinical development; BEIS remained accountable for any projects bringing COVID vaccine manufacturing and research and development by the UKRI onto UK shores. This MoU is at SM/27, INQ000065289.
- 10.37 On 1 October 2022 the work of the VTF transitioned to the UK Health Security Agency (**UKHSA**) under the newly formed Covid Vaccine Unit and the Office for Life Sciences (**OLS**). COVID-19 vaccine supply responsibilities moved to the UKHSA, while responsibility for the VTF onshoring programme moved to the OLS. DHSC has taken on the VTF's responsibility for international policy, strategy and engagement roles.
- 10.38 In recognition of the different funding pools and Accounting Officer processes, the assurance routes for vaccines business cases, and manufacturing and onshoring (i.e. the domestic manufacturing of vaccines in the UK) business cases were scrutinised through their relevant departments before coming back to the relevant joint approvals board. Advice was then provided to the relevant departmental Accounting Officer in relation to the regularity, propriety, feasibility, and value for money of the proposed activity.
- 10.39 Final investment approvals for VTF business cases over the £150m threshold were taken by a Ministerial Panel. The Ministerial Panel brought together ministers from BEIS, the DHSC, HMT, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (in respect of international issues) and the Cabinet Office to ensure a transparent process with all ministers appropriately sighted, regardless of the assurance route.
- 10.40 Investment proposals with a value of less than £150m were considered by the VTF's Investment Panel, which brought together officials from BEIS, the DHSC, HMT and the Cabinet Office. Any decisions that were deemed novel, contentious or repercussive, required Chief Secretary of the Treasury approval.

Vaccine Task Force – National Audit Office Reports

- 10.41 The National Audit Office published two reports relevant to BEIS in relation to vaccines.
- 10.42 The first report was published in December 2020 and focused on an investigation for preparations for potential Covid-19 vaccines and the work of the VTF, and can be

¹⁴ Written Ministerial Statement, Prime Minister, 22 July 2021, Machinery of Government Change: Vaccine Taskforce - Hansard - UK Parliament (SM/167, INQ000146517)

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found at SM/28, INQ000065014. At the time of publication of the first report, BEIS was responsible for securing supply of vaccines for the UK, which included: “*supporting the research and development of potential vaccines; selecting which vaccines to purchase; securing UK access to sufficient quantities of vaccines; and developing manufacturing capacity to ensure supply*”. At that time, the total expected cost of contracts signed for potential Covid-19 vaccines was £2.9bn. BEIS expected to invest £6.2bn up to 2022-23.

- 10.43 The second report was published in February 2022 and explored the rollout of the Covid-19 vaccination programme but included a broader focus on DHSC’s role in delivering the vaccine rollout. This report can be found at SM/29, INQ000065228.
- 10.44 The reports concluded that the vaccine programme had operated at unprecedented pace, scale and complexity, and in conditions of profound uncertainty, to achieve the pressing objectives of supporting the creation of vaccines, securing access and administering them to the population as quickly as possible. The evidence indicated that the programme had saved lives and reduced the incidence of serious illness and hospitalisation. The reports also found that it had provided value for money but needed to identify a clear path to a future sustainable model. As such, it was recommended that BEIS provide input on capturing wider lessons from the programme and identify how a future sustainable model could be achieved (taking into account costs, structures, staffing and delivery models).

Working from home guidance

- 10.45 The Working from Home policy was led by No 10 which delegated to BEIS work on stakeholder engagement in relation to professional and business sectors in order to inform central decision making.
- 10.46 In March 2020, sector teams were asked to collate business intelligence from their relevant stakeholders. This included how well workers and businesses were adjusting to working from home and the impact that the lockdown was having on their business. This information was fed into centrally organised dashboards, which were coordinated by the Business Intelligence and Readiness Directorate.
- 10.47 On 18 November 2020, Cabinet Office asked BEIS’ Professional and Business Services Team (**PBS** Team) to provide ongoing advice to inform Government’s policy, guidance and messaging regarding working from home, in addition to its usual business intelligence gathering. The PBS team’s remit spanned highly relevant sectors

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- of the economy (such as audit, accountancy, consultancy and legal services), where for the most part, employees were able to work from home more easily than other sectors. The PBS team continued to provide support and advice to Cabinet Office throughout the pandemic to inform further decisions around working from home policy as well as disseminating government guidelines around working from home policy to relevant stakeholders.
- 10.48 On 24 March 2020, Cabinet Office Secretariat commissioned BEIS to present an assessment of the implications of home working and social distancing measures. As such, BEIS ministers were briefed to intervene on additional regulatory burdens for businesses, on the basis that additional restrictions would have significant costs and negative economic impacts. This is evidenced by the briefings for the Covid-S and Covid-O meetings, which, by way of an example are referred to at paragraph 10.9.
- 10.49 The PBS team engaged regularly with organisations that had a regional presence. These meetings gave these organisations the opportunity to express views relating to the Working from Home policy. There were 11 PBS sector calls, with the first roundtable meeting being held on 14 May 2020 and the last being held on 18 January 2022. The meetings would broadly follow a similar structure – a Ministerial update, and then a discussion and feedback session, which functioned as an opportunity for the sector to cover any areas where they had concerns.
- 10.50 BEIS officials worked to address concerns that businesses may be non-compliant with the Working from Home policy. See, for example at SM/30, INQ000065034, the exchange of correspondence between No 10 and BEIS. BEIS' PBS team used qualitative data gathered from stakeholders and the Cabinet Office's central Covid-19 dashboard to understand the extent to which people were working from home and for those who were not, whether this constituted non-compliance.
- 10.51 BEIS officials monitored the quantitative and qualitative data available around working from home levels and spoke with analysts and academic experts to forecast what "new normal" working from home practices might be post-pandemic. BEIS officials aimed to reinforce the Government's messaging around working from home, whilst considering the impact on businesses through the feedback provided in engagement in the PBS roundtable meetings.

Working Safely during Coronavirus guidance

- 10.52 The Working Safely during Coronavirus guidance was first published by the Department in May 2020, with the aim of helping businesses and their employees

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operate safely during the pandemic. DCMS also published versions of this guidance for the sectors within their responsibility.

10.53 BEIS was responsible for nine sets of Working Safely guidance. The exact list of guidance documents varied over time, as later in the pandemic guidance was merged and simplified. The full list of guidance at January 2021 (as a mid-point) included:

- a) Close contact services;
- b) Construction and other outdoor work;
- c) Factories, plants and warehouses;
- d) Labs and research facilities;
- e) Offices and contact centres;
- f) Other people's homes;
- g) Restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services;
- h) Shops and branches;
- i) Vehicles.

10.54 The Working Safely guidance was a significant new area of responsibility for BEIS. There was considerable desire from ministers for the guidance to be produced quickly, recognising the economic impacts that national lockdowns were having. I participated in a discussion at the Covid-19 Economic and Business Response Implementation Group in April 2020, where the approach to opening workplaces safely was discussed. The draft paper is at SM/30a, INQ000064807. An action was agreed that BEIS and HSE should:

*“.....Work with employers, BROs and unions to **agree further practical steps on what Safer Workplaces look like**, working closely with PHE and HSE to build the design principles into detailed guidance with buy-in. The aim should be to produce co-created guidance and guidelines which are ready to be published at the same time as any announcements are made on lifting restrictions.”*

10.55 The Secretary of State (Mr Sharma) set out to officials that his intention for the guidance, which he had agreed with the then Chancellor (The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak), was to seek to support UK employers to get their businesses back up and running, and workplaces operating as safely as possible, whilst helping to limit transmission of Covid-19. The first version was produced in a matter of weeks including consulting many hundreds of businesses, Business Representative Organisations and Trade Unions, to ensure the guidance would be accessible. For example, in March 2020, I

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- personally in my former role as Director General for Business Services, carried out a range of calls directly with representatives from a number of Trade Unions in order to obtain feedback to help officials drafting the first sets of guidance. I recall these being productive conversations in which unions gave helpful feedback. As the former Secretary of State (Mr Sharma) set out in his statement of 12 May 2020, firms, unions, industry bodies and the devolved administrations all fed into this guidance to give businesses and their employees the confidence they needed to work safely¹⁵.
- 10.56 It was vital that the guidance incorporated expert advice and the latest evidence regarding public health and the management of risk. I therefore established a co-drafting structure between BEIS, HSE and DHSC / PHE to ensure this. In my role as DG for business sectors, I chaired a daily meeting attended by senior officials from this tripartite team (BEIS, DHSC / PHE and HSE) to guide the work. All changes to the first draft of the guidance documents had to be approved by all three parties before it could be submitted to the BEIS Secretary of State (Mr Sharma). Once approved by BEIS Secretary of State, final drafts were submitted to the Health Secretary's office and Prime Minister's office for final approval for publication.
- 10.57 The Department had no new formal powers in respect to the enforcement of workplace safety matters. Rather, BEIS officials worked closely with counterparts in the HSE in order to ensure that the new guidance was compliant with and accurately reflected HSE powers. The guidance made clear that where the HSE or local authority identified employers that were not taking action to comply with the relevant public health legislation and guidance (for example to ensure social distancing) to control public health risks, that further enforcement action under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 could be taken. For example the guidance set out that *".....Where the enforcing authority, such as the HSE or your local authority, identifies employers who are not taking action to comply with the relevant public health legislation and guidance to control public health risks, they will consider taking a range of actions to improve control of workplace risks. For example, this would cover employers not taking appropriate action to socially distance, where possible. The actions the HSE can take include the provision of specific advice to employers through to issuing enforcement notices to help secure improvements"*¹⁶

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/business-secretarys-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-12-may-2020> (SM/168, INQ000146518)

¹⁶ <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20200511232356/https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery> (SM/169, INQ000146546)

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- 10.58 The first version of the guidance was for a period the most downloaded document on gov.uk and a poster showing that businesses were following the guidance, which we provided on the BEIS website, became a common sight at businesses across the country. Many engagements with businesses were held following publication of the initial version of the guidance and it was widely welcomed.
- 10.59 Versions of the Working Safely guidance produced by BEIS and DCMS are held by the National Archives¹⁷. Once the guidance became a live document, even very minor changes such as a new link would count as a new version. There are therefore a very large total number of versions (1645 instances from 3 years) of the guidance within the complete record, which includes both BEIS and DCMS guidance, although the number of versions reflecting substantive changes is a very small fraction of the total. Nevertheless, I recognise the number of changes to the guidance was a repeated source of stakeholder feedback, with organisations commenting that it was difficult to keep up with the pace and number of changes to the guidance. The core guidance on safety measures to follow in the workplace remained constant throughout, but there were a large number of changes to reflect evolving government policy during the lockdown and reopening periods. BEIS holds versions as records, for example where there was a substantive change following consultation, and I have listed these at Annex H. These can be sent as a follow up to the Inquiry.
- 10.60 Due to the high number of changes to guidance, in this statement I have concentrated on setting out details of significant updates following a major change to government policy and informal consultation with businesses, Trade Unions and business representative organisations. These are listed in the table at Annex H, along with details of the key announcements that precipitated the change, and the stakeholder engagement and consultation that took place with Trade Unions and business representatives in order to shape the guidance. Further details are given in the following paragraphs.
- 10.61 Throughout this section of the statement, I refer to ‘consultation’ with stakeholders. This consultation did not follow the formal legal definition of a government consultation but took many forms- including requests for written feedback and discussions through roundtable meetings. BEIS relied upon the collaboration and engagement of key stakeholders including Trade Unions and Business Representative Organisations, who were generous in giving up their time to help shape the guidance.

¹⁷ https://webarchive.Nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa*/https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19 (SM/170, INQ000146544)

Guidance Taskforces

10.62 Five taskforces were developed in order initially to create the Working Safely guidance. BEIS was responsible for two of these taskforces, as outlined below. A briefing for the non-essential retail taskforce is at SM/3, INQ000064843. The definitions of 'essential' and 'non-essential' were determined by DHSC, MHCLG and Cabinet Office and changed during the different lockdowns. Engagement with both essential and non-essential businesses was handled by respective government departments.

List of Taskforces

Taskforce	Responsible Department
Pubs and restaurants	BEIS
Non-essential retail, including close-proximity services (e.g. salons)	BEIS
Recreation and leisure, including tourism, culture and heritage, libraries, entertainment and sport	DCMS
Places of worship	MHCLG
International aviation	DfT

Initial Consultation process

10.63 The Working Safely guidance was published on 11 May 2020 following a consultative process with: businesses, Trade Unions, PHE, HSE and business representative organisations (for example, the CBI and Federation of Small Businesses).¹⁸

10.64 This consultation exercise was run in April 2020, and again in May 2020 on the updated hospitality, personal care and retail sectors draft guidance in advance of these sectors full opening in June/July 2020. The consultation was coordinated by Ernst and Young

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-launched-to-help-get-brits-safely-back-to-work#stakeholder-commentary> (SM/171, INQ000146519)

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on behalf of BEIS. The responses were used to adjust the guidance. Most of the responses asked for further detail about aspects of government policies. For example, hospitality feedback included the following:

“There was near universal positive feedback on government’s efforts during this crisis, the guidance released to date and the engagement with industry throughout the development process. The general feedback was that the guidance was nearly complete, with many suggestions around how the guidance could be improved.

Several key themes have been identified in the feedback:

1. Social distancing and the impact on business viability (36 of 60 responses)
2. Practicality of specific measures (30 of 60 responses)
3. Clarity on acceptable mitigation measures (29 of 60 responses)
4. Clarity on use of PPE and face coverings (34 of 60 responses)
5. Greater guidance required on use of bathrooms (16 of 60 responses)
6. Requests to reference other obligations and authorities (15 of 60 responses)
7. Scope clarifications (8 of 60 responses)”

A summary of the consultation is at SM/32, INQ000065304.

10.65 In addition to these consultations, in April 2020 BEIS Secretary of State (Mr Sharma) hosted separate roundtable meetings with stakeholders from the hospitality, retail and personal care sectors. That engagement was followed by further roundtable meetings led by BEIS officials which discussed the draft guidance in more detail.

10.66 A number of key stakeholders welcomed the publication of the initial Working Safely guidance in providing greater clarity for businesses and their workers. For example, the following comments were included in the press statement which accompanied the launch of guidance on 11 May 2020:

Frances O’Grady, General Secretary, Trades Union Congress:

“These safety guidelines are a step in the right direction. All employers must now carry out and publish risk assessments in consultation with unions and their workforces. After the confusion of the last few days working people will only feel confident if government and employers act now to make safer working a reality in every workplace. Getting this right is in the national interest. If rogue employers cut corners it puts us all

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at risk of another spike in infections. And government must get to grips with the ongoing crisis in PPE, as more workers start to require it.”

Adam Marshall, DG, British Chambers of Commerce:

“This is a significant step forward in terms of the information available for businesses, who will now need to digest the detail. The guidance signals big changes for the way that many businesses operate, and some firms will now need time to plan and speak to their employees so that they can return to work safely.”

Craig Beaumont, Director of External Affairs and Advocacy, Federation of Small Businesses:

“FSB has engaged through this process with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and we appreciate that our points have been taken on board for the UK small business community. Today’s guidance is practical, workable and proportionate for small businesses. It will be a long journey but this guidance will provide the basis for small employers to have the positive conversations needed with their staff. This is the first step to getting the economy back on its feet.”¹⁹

Further Updates to the Working Safely Guidance

- 10.67 As noted above, the Working Safely guidance was updated frequently during the period 2020-2022. In Annex H below I have set out a table with a summary of key changes. I have also set out below details of key updates to the guidance including the approach taken to stakeholder consultation and the respective roles and responsibilities of Cabinet Office and BEIS and other departments.
- 10.68 On 29 May 2020, the Working Safely guidance was updated to include details on Test and Trace, this is shown at SM/170.
- 10.69 On 1 June 2020, the Prime Minister announced the introduction of Step 2a, where outdoor retail was permitted to open, and groups of six were allowed to meet outdoors.²⁰ On 9 June 2020, the Secretary of State, (Mr Sharma), then made a

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-launched-to-help-get-brits-safely-back-to-work> (SM/171, INQ000146519)

²⁰ Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 28 May 2020 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (SM/172, INQ000146520)

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- statement on Step2b, including further updates to the Working Safely guidance. Step 2b came into force on 15 June 2020.²¹²² In the statement the Secretary of State recognised the hardships that restrictions had caused for businesses and their staff and explained the approach to cautious re-opening of the economy²³. The speech can be seen at SM/34, INQ000065346.
- 10.70 On 15 June 2020 the Working Safely guidance was further updated to reflect industry feedback that it would be helpful to include details about the Test and Trace service. Detailed wording on Test and Trace was provided directly by DHSC initially and then from Cabinet Office as the Covid-19 Secretariat began to play a more active role in managing the guidance process.
- 10.71 The initial drafts of the guidance were approved by the BEIS Secretary of State and the Prime Minister's Office. The process for clearance of guidance from May 2020 to June 2020 included sign off from PHE and HSE in addition to DHSC and Cabinet Office.
- 10.72 From June 2020, Cabinet Office led the guidance clearance via a formalised 'triple lock clearance' process. Through this process, DHSC, PHE (who were involved in developing the guidance alongside BEIS) and No 10 would jointly provide clearance for each new version of the guidance.
- 10.73 Cabinet Office managed changes to guidance through their coordination role and either led the clearance process or provided direct generic text to include in subsequent guidance iterations to reflect ongoing (sector specific guidance) policy development. Examples of this policy development include social distancing policy, Test and Trace policy and later policy on Covid-19 certification. BEIS was not responsible for any of these policy areas but participated in Covid-O discussions on these topics.
- 10.74 This Cabinet Office central coordination role was important in ensuring that guidance produced by BEIS, DfT and DCMS was consistent across all sectors in scope. Overall, the intention behind the approach to the guidance by the departments involved was to try to simplify information for business and their employees as much as possible by

²¹ Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 10 June 2020 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (SM/173, INQ000146521)

²² The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 2020 (legislation.gov.uk) (SM/174, INQ000146522)

²³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/business-secretarys-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-9-june-2020> (SM/175, INQ000146523)

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reflecting information that existed in multiple different separate pieces of guidance from DHSC, and NHS Test and Trace in one document tailored towards each sector.

- 10.75 From June 2020, it was agreed between Cabinet Office, BEIS and DCMS that the Working Safely guidance would be treated as a live document with frequent updates in response to stakeholder feedback and requests for clarification. The team responsible for guidance within BEIS were responsible for collating stakeholder comments into spreadsheets to discuss weekly with PHE and HSE. This can be seen at SM/35, INQ000065263, SM/35a, INQ000066031.
- 10.76 Between June 2020 and September 2020, further updates to the Working Safely guidance followed after the implementation of Step 3 and the changes to the 2m rule to 1m+, which included: guidance on local lockdowns, support bubbles, record-keeping of staff and visitors, what to do in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak in the workplace, details of entertainment permitted in hospitality venues, the protection of the extremely clinically vulnerable, mass gatherings, ventilation, when and where to wear face coverings, disposal of face coverings, PPE, work-related travel, mandated Test and Trace requirements such as QR codes, and other measures designed to protect staff and customers’.
- 10.77 On 18 September 2020, the Working Safely guidance was updated to reflect new Track and Trace requirements for businesses, with businesses being required to take personal details for contact tracing and the use of QR codes.
- 10.78 On 22 September 2020, the Prime Minister announced a package of stronger national measures, which included: early closure for pubs, bars; table service only; the closure of businesses which were not Covid-19 secure; the expansion of the use of face coverings, and new fines for those that failed to comply; office workers to work from home if they could; the ‘rule of six’ indoors and outdoors. The Prime Minister’s statement can be found at SM/36, INQ000065358. BEIS worked closely with Cabinet Office to assess the impact of these measures on businesses and their staff and ensure that they were reflected in the Working Safely guidance.
- 10.79 On 24 September 2020, it became a requirement to wear face coverings in restaurants, bars, public houses and theatres. BEIS updated its Working Safely guidance on working from home, supporting staff to self-isolate and (for close contact services) mandatory PPE for staff.
- 10.80 On 24 September 2020, the Working Safely guidance was updated to reflect the requirement to work from home if possible, and tiering restrictions. The three-tier

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system came into force on 14 October 2020. The legislation is at **SM/117**
INQ000065423. Different guidance was in place for educational and childcare settings, wedding and civil partnership receptions and celebrations and public transport operators.²⁴

- 10.81 Tiering was a Cabinet Office led policy. BEIS officials' view, as represented in discussions at the time on tiering, was that a priority should be to bring the R number down whilst reducing disruption to businesses and livelihoods, recognising the impact that restrictions had both on individuals and the economy. BEIS briefings considered it important to have a data-led approach, targeting the areas with the highest rates of infection including care homes, and education settings as well as wider settings. BEIS briefings advocated for clearer communication with businesses to help them understand and comply with tiering. Details can be found at SM/38, INQ000064943.
- 10.82 On 31 October 2020, a national lockdown or stay-at-home order was announced, to take effect from 5 November 2020. BEIS Secretary of State was updated in advance of this announcement by officials and attended a Cabinet discussion about the measures. The update can be found at SM/39, INQ000064967. BEIS made further updates to the Working Safely guidance (for example hospitality venues were required to close, but could still provide takeaway services). The guidance was updated further to account for local restriction tiers and the announcement of the Prime Minister's Winter Plan, which can be found at SM/40, INQ000065360. During November and December 2020, the tier system continued to be reviewed at Covid-O meetings. At a Covid-O Ministerial meeting on 19 December 2020, it was agreed that any further measures should be agreed by Covid-O(M) before being adopted, rather than through Local Authority Committee Gold meetings only.
- 10.83 On 4 January 2021, a further national lockdown was announced, to take effect from 5 January 2021. BEIS made further updates to the Working Safely guidance in light of the national restrictions which came into force and added information into the guidance on testing and vaccinations²⁵.

²⁴ <https://webarchive.Nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20200924203153/https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19> (SM/176, INQ000146524)

²⁵ <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20210104213524/https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19> (SM/176, INQ000146524)

Spring Roadmap Guidance Updates and Consultation

- 10.84 The 'Roadmap to Recovery' took place in four stages in 2021. In advance of the publication of the Roadmap to Recovery, BEIS was asked by Cabinet Office for views on the most appropriate order for the re-opening of sectors. BEIS provided these in a paper which fed into Cabinet Office thinking. This paper can be found at SM/41, INQ000065318.
- 10.85 Further readiness work was done, with details at SM/42, INQ000065239 SM/43, INQ000065109 and SM/44, INQ000065128.
- 10.86 The Spring roadmap out of lockdown was published on 22 February 2021. On 28 February 2021, BEIS wrote to over two hundred sector and Trade Unions representatives to seek feedback on BEIS' Working Safely guidance. Sixty-seven responses were received from a range of business and Trade Union stakeholders across sectors. BEIS specifically asked business and Trade Union stakeholders for insights on how well the guidance had been working in practice when it came to business operations, workplace safety, disproportionately impacted groups and wider lessons learned to date. The feedback is at SM/45, INQ000065362.
- 10.87 The majority of responses to consultation (60%) noted the successful implementation of BEIS guidance and/or highlighted the positive role of the guidance in enabling them to make workplaces Covid-19 Secure, reopening safely when they have been permitted to do so. Further details can be found at SM/46, INQ000065086. The positive feedback focused on the consistency, clarity and practicality of the guidance, supporting businesses to make informed decisions on how to protect their employees and customers'. This has in turn enabled businesses and employees to have a high level of confidence in the safety of their workplaces and their implementation of control measures to reduce transmission of the virus. Many stakeholders also praised the flexibility of the guidance, allowing businesses discretion when making risk assessments and establishing Covid-19-Secure measures, so they could take into account the specific nature of their business.
- 10.88 Stakeholders also expressed a number of areas where there were concerns and requests for government to do more to clarify the position of both guidance and regulatory requirements (and in particular to explain what was a legal requirement and what was a matter of voluntary guidance). For example, stakeholders requested greater clarity on a range of policies including face coverings, working from home and social distancing.

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- 10.89 Wherever possible, BEIS took forward these suggestions to provide clarity in the guidance. Where feedback BEIS received did not directly fall within the remit of BEIS' Working Safely guidance, for instance clarifying the intended policy and messaging on working from home, BEIS flagged these points for Cabinet Office to consider providing this clarity through further work on the policies. Other feedback could not be incorporated as it went against the basis of public health and scientific evidence at this time, for example relaxing the 2m social distancing rule. BEIS therefore focused on what could feasibly and usefully be updated in our guidance. BEIS also engaged in dialogue with Cabinet Office on how to clarify guidance and messaging on the return to work.
- 10.90 BEIS worked closely with PHE and HSE to review potential updates, ultimately identifying a number of updates to address user needs while seeking to ensure the continued safety of employees and customers'. The key updates included providing more advice on ventilation and testing; embedding additional advice on taking into account individuals with protected characteristics; and addressing specific requests from the retail sector to provide Covid-19-Secure guidance on re-opening fitting rooms and customer use of testers.
- 10.91 After Step 1 of the roadmap out of lockdown came into force on 29 March 2021, BEIS continued to update its Working Safely guidance in consultation with stakeholders, in areas such as: ventilation, testing, non-essential retail, hospitality, close contact services. BEIS always worked with Cabinet Office on consultation for the Working Safely guidance. For examples of the level of consultation undertaken with the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and businesses, please see: SM/25 - INQ000065072
- 10.92 BEIS engaged in a frequent dialogue with Cabinet Office during the remaining steps of the roadmap, sometimes speaking multiple times a week both with a central guidance team working across HMG and with a team specifically focussed on the business guidance who could speak to the detail, request changes to messages and discuss drafting. Cabinet Office led on producing key messages for BEIS and other departments (DCMS and Defra) to relay to business and decided policy in a centralised way during this period. BEIS ministers were involved in these discussions through Covid-O and Covid-S meetings.
- 10.93 BEIS continued regular discussions with business representative organisations and Trade Unions representatives through 2021-early 2022 and used this feedback to update guidance, and also shared feedback with Cabinet Office so that they could reflect on this in developing government policy.

Autumn and Winter Plan 2021 Guidance Updates

10.94 The Autumn and Winter Plan was published on 14 September 2021. It consisted of Plan A and Plan B, to sustain progress and ensure the NHS did not come under unmanageable pressure. Plan A involved continued vaccination, Test, Trace and isolation, managing NHS pressure, clear guidance and communications and managing risks at the border. Plan B would involve more significant intervention – communicating to the public the increased risk, introducing mandatory vaccine-only COVID-status certification in certain settings and legally mandating face coverings in certain settings. Feedback was requested from stakeholders - including businesses, the CBI and the TUC, through a Director led roundtable meeting, and discussions continued on how to make the guidance more user-friendly. The feedback included the following points:

- “*.....Plan A is welcomed by businesses and the TUC. Businesses will support their employees to get vaccinated.*
- *Regarding Plan B, businesses have questions about the type of technology they will be required to check certification status if it becomes necessary. They would like to know if there will be some support for businesses to implement this policy and the time given to prepare for this. Guidance and regulations should be made available in advance of any scenario that triggers them arising.*
- *If working from home is introduced again, businesses would like clarity on business support and whether furlough will be reintroduced. They would like at least two weeks' notice.”*

The feedback also included:

- “*The TUC welcomed the extension of the support for self-isolation, but asked for more financial support for jobs, as well as sick pay. They asked for worker's representatives to be included in any consultations on guidance and regulations.”*

10.95 The minutes of the meeting are at SM/48, INQ000065167.

10.96 BEIS shared this feedback with Cabinet Office and emphasised the importance of giving businesses two weeks minimum advance notice of further changes. The Working Safely guidance was further updated based on feedback on ventilation messaging. Cabinet Office agreed to take forward a new ventilations campaign, and BEIS agreed to support this, which aimed to increase awareness of how ventilation

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- can help reduce transmission of Covid-19. BEIS also agreed to work with DHSC on updating the 'stay at home' guidance with current advice, updating on local authority capacity for spot checks, planning for shortages of social care workers, and to raise with DfT the impact of travel measures and travellers being asked to self-isolate when vaccinated.
- 10.97 BEIS had a regular dialogue with businesses and Trade Unions during November – December 2021 on the proposed implementation of Plan B. These discussions were productive and the feedback was useful to both BEIS and Cabinet Office. At this time, the Omicron variant was spreading. On 8 December 2021, the Prime Minister confirmed the move to Plan B.
- 10.98 In response to the spread of Omicron, BEIS updated the Working Safely guidance between 12 December 2021 and 24 February 2022. The measures ranged from: implementing working from home guidance, changing testing requirements for the need for a confirmatory PCR test, return to the workplace, and the removal of all legal measures on self-isolation.
- 10.99 Between March 2022 and April 2022, BEIS engaged with stakeholders again to request views on the future approach to managing Covid-19 risk in the workplace. Details can be found at SM/49, INQ000065241.
- 10.100 Overall, majority of the respondents supported the Government's approach of moving away from centrally set sector specific guidance and recommendations, towards a risk assessed approach carried out by each business incorporated into their existing risk assessments and employment policies, in line with broad public health advice.
- 10.101 Many organisations indicated that they continued to go above and beyond the baseline of guidance to maintain Covid-19 security since the 'Living with Covid Strategy' was published and many indicated that they would continue to do so after 1 April 2022 to maintain staff and customer confidence. Responses also identified areas where there were concerns and further clarity was needed on government policy, including self-isolation and testing. Stakeholders including businesses and Trade Unions flagged concerns about the increased risk for vulnerable individuals if guidance was scaled back. As many of the comments related to the substance of government policy rather than the drafting of the guidance, BEIS summarised these for Cabinet Office, along with some proposed next steps on how these could be addressed.
- 10.102 From April 2022, responsibility for workplace guidance moved from BEIS to the UKHSA. At this point the separate sector specific guidance was replaced by more

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general guidance on workplace safety. This guidance was called 'Reducing the spread of respiratory infections, including Covid-19, in the workplace'.²⁶

10.103 BEIS officials worked closely with UKHSA to shape a new set of 'Principles for Employers' that replaced the Working Safely guidance. BEIS engaged with 250 businesses and representative organisations (including Trade Unions) to seek their views on the future approach. This decision was taken by ministers at Covid-O on 29 March 2022. Further details are at SM/50, INQ000065354.

10.104 BEIS officials advised Minister Hands who attended the Covid-O meeting that businesses had been mostly supportive of the planned guidance transition. However, there were concerns expressed through consultation over the future of testing and whether advising workers to stay at home with symptoms would lead to increased rates of absenteeism. Trade Unions also commented through consultation that further clarity would be needed on how the new guidance would interact with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and also requested further information and guidance on how vulnerable people should be supported by employers.

10.105 BEIS' advice noted that there were legal and equalities impact considerations that would need to be considered by UKHSA, HSE and Cabinet Office as they finalised the enduring guidance.

Ventilation guidance

10.106 On 29 June 2021, Cabinet Office established a Ventilation Working Group, of which BEIS was a part. Other attendees included DCMS, HSE and DHSC. Further details are at SM/51, INQ000065133. The purpose of the group was to ensure existing guidance on ventilation was taken up by businesses and to explore options for improving ventilation. Cabinet Office intended to work with OGDs such as BEIS on the enforcement of ventilation. BEIS supported the objectives of the group, but also considered that business participation in improving ventilation should be voluntary and appropriately incentivised.

10.107 BEIS' engagement to assess barriers to improving ventilation (including a survey of 520 businesses and other stakeholders including Trade Unions) suggested that key barriers for businesses to improve ventilation included a lack of awareness of what constituted good ventilation from the perspective of managing the risk of Covid-19

²⁶ <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20220429151824/https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reducing-the-spread-of-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19-in-the-workplace> (SM/177, INQ000146525)

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- transmission (i.e. businesses not being aware of what steps they could take to improve ventilation) and the ability to invest and make improvements.
- 10.108 BEIS also considered the effects of Covid-19 on businesses and whether this would impact whether or not a business could improve ventilation. As an example, the gross domestic product published by the Office for National Statistics ²⁷ at Quarter 2 2021 indicated the hospitality sector (excluding accommodation) had lost a total of £22.5bn in economic output compared with pre-Covid-19 levels over the course of the pandemic. It was likely against this context that not all businesses would have been able to comply with mandated ventilation improvements without additional financial support.
- 10.109 BEIS worked closely with analysts, HSE and MHCLG to develop proposals for encouraging businesses to ventilate the workplace. Details can be found at SM/52, INQ000065159. The rationale for measures such as air purifiers and the provision of free CO2 monitors to businesses were considered, however evidence suggested that deployment of monitors was unlikely to have an impact on ventilation without further support to make improvements should poor ventilation be detected. BEIS recommended to Cabinet Office developing a comprehensive package of policy measures including: further targeted communication and guidance (especially to small businesses), further research to better understand sectoral risks and considering what further incentives and support could be offered to businesses.
- 10.110 On 9 September 2021, BEIS officials sent a submission to ministers, inviting them to consider ways of improving ventilation in higher-risk business settings during Autumn/Winter 2021 (SM/52a, INQ000065170). This issue had been considered at Cabinet on 7 September 2021. It was reviewed by BEIS Secretary of State and Special Advisers and agreed with recommendations to favour low-cost, non-fiscal interventions to encourage ventilation (such as ensuring that there is an adequate supply of fresh air to indoor spaces, identifying poorly ventilated spaces and taking steps to improve fresh airflow such as opening and keeping open vents and regularly opening windows, if possible).
- 10.111 BEIS engaged with businesses and worked with Cabinet Office to distribute information around ventilation campaigns. This included messages about how businesses could change their air conditioning systems to ensure they provided 100% fresh air and did not recirculate air, as recirculated air can increase the rate of

²⁷ ONS Note, some of this lost economic activity would have been paid as wages (SM/178, INQ000146541)

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transmission. BEIS worked with Cabinet Office to deliver case study examples. For example, Accenture conducted ventilation assessments for each of its buildings. This assessment found that some mechanical ventilation systems recirculated air. Accenture then adjusted the settings on these systems to ensure they provided fresh air as opposed to recirculated air.

10.112 By 11 January 2022, and following the spread of the Omicron variant, Cabinet Office asked BEIS to provide an updated engagement plan for its sectors. Details can be found at SM/53, INQ000065213. There was a desire to ensure that businesses were aware of the steps that were required to improve ventilation, and to hear feedback on the current government approach. BEIS provided this plan and then delivered further engagement.

10.113 Following the closure of BEIS' dedicated Covid-19 response directorate in April 2022, HSE and UKHSA continued further work through 2022 to improve awareness of the importance of ventilation as part of wider guidance.

Covid-19 Certification ('Vaccine Passports')

10.114 The Covid-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan 2021, published on 14 September 2021, set out government's aims to sustain the progress made and prepare the country for future challenges, while ensuring the NHS did not come under unsustainable pressure during this period. As part of this, DHSC published a consultation (also called the 'certification review') on proposals to introduce mandatory vaccination status certification (also called 'vaccine passports') in certain settings. BEIS was asked by Cabinet Office to assist DHSC in this work - in particular, engaging the business community to obtain feedback to improve the design of the policy.

10.115 In September 2021, draft regulations and guidance to implement certification were produced by Cabinet Office and DHSC. BEIS lawyers and policy leads provided feedback on these documents. At DHSC's request, BEIS shared the draft regulations and guidance with stakeholders and sought feedback to support the call for evidence. Feedback from the hospitality and nightclub sectors included requests for increased clarity of wording in the draft guidance and for further details around enforcement and data gathering. Stakeholders raised concerns about the economic impact of the policy and the practicalities of implementation (for example obtaining buy-in from staff and guests). Details can be found at SM/54, INQ000065173.

10.116 Following the certification review, DHSC concluded that certification should not be mandated in a domestic context unless 'Plan B' was activated in response to concerns

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about the virus. While there would be a public health benefit, the impacts – particularly on those who had not yet been offered a vaccine and would therefore require repeated testing – were judged by government to be disproportionate at the time. DHSC published guidance setting out how certification would be introduced in a Plan B scenario, as at SM/55, INQ000065361. In practice, however, these measures were not introduced. If introduced, the Government proposed that mandatory vaccine-only certification would be introduced for the following venues and events:

- (a) all nightclubs and other venues open after 1 am with alcohol, music and dancing
- (b) indoor events with 500 or more attendees where those attendees are likely to stand and mix to a desi degree, or move around during the event, such as music venues or large receptions
- (c) outdoor, crowded settings with 4,000 or more attendees where those attendees are likely to stand, or move around during the event, such as outdoor festivals
- (d) any settings with 10,000 or more attendees, such as large sports and music stadia.

10.117 Subsequently, Cabinet Office and DHSC looked into whether businesses might introduce certification on a voluntary basis and BEIS supported further discussions with the hospitality sector to encourage this. However, in practice the barriers to implementation- including customers' views and costs meant that there was not widespread uptake.

PPE

10.118 BEIS support for PPE was focussed on work to develop a domestic supply chain for PPE products (the '**PPE Make**' project) and on the work of OPSS in providing advice in respect of the supply of PPE and that the PPE produced and procured met the necessary legal requirements.

10.119 As set out above, the OPSS was created in January 2018 to deliver consumer protection and to support business confidence, productivity and growth. It regulates a wide range of products, with a focus on safety and integrity. The OPSS forms part of BEIS.

10.120 At the start of the pandemic, OPSS were providing guidance to local authorities on a daily basis, predominately in respect of the various regulations and what was required to enforce them and in collecting data from local authorities on the enforcement of regulations.

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- 10.121 In addition to this, OPSS provided advice in respect of the supply of PPE and that the PPE produced and procured met the necessary requirements. At all times, both BEIS and OPSS' role was of an advisory nature.
- 10.122 On 19 April 2020, Lord Paul Deighton was appointed by Matt Hancock, then Secretary of State for Health, to lead the national effort to produce essential PPE for frontline health and social care staff. Lord Deighton *“was to coordinate the end-to-end process of design through to manufacture, including streamlining the approvals and procurement process to ensure new domestic PPE supplies are rapidly approved and get to where they are needed.”*²⁸
- 10.123 The PPE taskforce, of which Lord Deighton's work initially formed a part, was originally envisioned to cover five activities in the chain of PPE provision: establishing the demand, sourcing the supply, making appropriate allocation decisions for the PPE, distributing it and ensuring appropriate use. Lord Deighton led on the strategy for boosting domestic manufacture of PPE.²⁹
- 10.124 In support of Lord Deighton, BEIS and DHSC created a joint team: 'PPE Make'. On 27 April 2020, Tim Jarvis, then Director of Consumer and Competition policy in BEIS, was appointed to lead that team.
- 10.125 The BEIS/DHSC team worked together via the Office for Life Sciences (a joint BEIS-DHSC unit). The team provided policy expertise and sector contacts for the use of Lord Deighton. They assisted in setting up governance systems and mechanisms and provided insights into sectors such as medicine and textile manufacturers where companies could support PPE production, particularly where demand in their own sectors had fallen. The team contributed to facilitating the approval of PPE for use by the NHS, this work built on the work of OPSS. The team also worked on the relaxing ('easing') of regulations to fast-track supplies of PPE. As part of this work the team worked with HSE and Local Authorities to fast-track PPE through the product safety assessment processes. The team also worked with manufacturers to avoid bottlenecks at the approval stage of their product and to assess how else to support new suppliers to start successful production quickly, including scaling up the activities of the HSE to provide safety sign off and, via the OPSS, producing online guidance for businesses

²⁸ Press release, Olympics chief brought in to boost PPE production, 19 April 2020, (SM/179, INQ000146540)

²⁹ SOS PPE Update 1 May 2020 (SM/180, INQ000146512)

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- wanting to manufacture PPE. This included guidance for both small scale and high volume manufacturers.^{30 31 32 33}
- 10.126 On 22 June 2020 the BEIS PPE Make team provided an update to the interim Permanent Secretary Sam Beckett, setting out the contribution the team had made to the cross-government PPE programme. This update explained that in the view of the responsible Director, the PPE Make programme had largely achieved its objectives and that the time was now right to de-mobilise the team, to allow staff to be moved to other priorities.
- 10.127 The update noted that pre-Covid-19, UK manufacturers supplied less than 1% of the PPE used by NHS and social care, but that by June 2020, UK manufacturing was supplying 20% of the increased UK demand for PPE. Most of these manufacturers were making PPE for the first time and had benefited from a range of government support including CBILs, support with sourcing raw materials and machinery to convert processes and specialist advice from the manufacturing catapults.
- 10.128 The update clarified that the Director for PPE Make within BEIS had discussed this matter with Lord Deighton and confirmed that DHSC were content with this arrangement which would be consistent with how other parts of government were moving back to business as usual in their relationships with DHSC on PPE.
- 10.129 On 28 July 2020 advice was put to BEIS' Secretary of State Alok Sharma recommending that with winter stockpiles of PPE in place, and DHSC leading on category strategies, BEIS could begin to wind down the PPE Make project and handover completely to DHSC.
- 10.130 On 12 August 2020 BEIS' PPE Make team undertook a lessons-learned exercise. Please see details at SM/56, INQ000066032. The resulting document summarised the activity of the team during April-August and "...covers a number of currently open issues that are being taken forward by standing BEIS teams and recommendations to feed into longer term thinking, which goes beyond preparations for a second wave of Covid-19."
- 10.131 The BEIS/DHSC team was disbanded on 11 September 2020.

³⁰ PPE Paper for Departmental Board, 30 April 2020, (SM/181, INQ000146513)

³¹ update_080420_Ministerial Update (SM/182, INQ000064792)

³² New High-Volume Manufacturers of COVID-19 PPE (bsif.co.uk) (SM/183, INQ000146526) New Small-Scale Manufacturers of COVID-19 PPE (bsif.co.uk) (SM/184, INQ000146527)

³³ Guidance for manufacturers and makers of face visors to comply with the General Product Safety Regulations 2005 (publishing.service.gov.uk) (SM/185, INQ000146542)

OPSS work on product safety, operational and technical support for PPE

- 10.132 I have outlined the background to OPSS at paragraphs 6.7 above. OPSS implemented two regulatory changes (also called 'regulatory easements' as these regulatory changes removed a potential barrier to deployment of PPE) that enabled Covid-19 related PPE to be placed on the market more quickly, without reducing essential health and safety requirements, in line with the approach taken by the European Commission. OPSS advised businesses on compliance with regulatory requirements for Covid-19 related PPE through publication of guidance aimed at manufacturers. This included a guide for small manufacturers and separate guidance for high volume manufacturers, explaining the simplified regulatory processes.
- 10.133 OPSS also provided bespoke compliance advice for 10 key potential manufacturers identified by Cabinet Office. OPSS liaised with Conformity Assessment Bodies, Regulators and The UK Accreditation Body to encourage prioritisation of Covid-19 related PPE conformity assessments.
- 10.134 OPSS also provided operational, regulatory and technical support drawing on its technical and regulatory expertise to support the supply of PPE to healthcare workers. HSE were responsible for regulation of the use of PPE in healthcare settings. OPSS were members of the Cabinet Office's Decision-Making Committee (**DMC**) and provided technical and policy advice to DMC on the safety of Covid-19 PPE, alongside HSE, who are the regulator for workplace PPE.
- 10.135 OPSS provided operational support, alongside HSE, at DHSC's Daventry site, advising on technical documentation and compliance of PPE at point of entry to speed up supply. OPSS set up a regulatory cell consisting of OPSS, HSE and MHRA to speed up approvals of PPE and medical devices and resolve cross-cutting issues more quickly. OPSS also coordinated an operation working with local authority Trading Standards at ports and borders, to detect and detain unsafe PPE used for Covid-19 protection being sent to the UK and to prevent it from being placed on the market.
- 10.136 OPSS also provided compliance and technical advice on a range of other Covid-19 related products during the pandemic including issuing guidance on the regulatory requirements for face coverings and hand sanitiser and advising DHSC and Cabinet Office on the compliance and technical assessment of air purifiers and of UV-C devices.

Vaccine uptake

- 10.137 There were a number of settings where BEIS was required to consider vaccination status. For example, on 12 March 2021, BEIS was asked by Cabinet Office to assist DHSC on improving vaccine uptake, ensuring that messaging was correctly delivered to businesses. Employers were being asked to be as supportive as possible in allowing their employees to get vaccinated. Details can be found at SM/57, INQ000065079.
- 10.138 In March 2021, BEIS Secretary of State Mr Kwasi Kwarteng supported a campaign to address vaccine hesitancy in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (**BAME**) communities³⁴.
- 10.139 BEIS provided advice to Cabinet Office on vaccination as a condition of employment of all care home staff (including office workers).
- 10.140 BEIS considered that the detail of the health impacts was a matter for DHSC, but BEIS officials advised on the views of employers.
- 10.141 Details are at SM/58, INQ000065082.

16. Section 11 - Impact assessments

- 11.1 BEIS participated in Cabinet Office led work to consider the differential impacts of Covid-19 on disproportionately impacted groups. This work continued throughout 2020-2022, initially through individual commissions from the Cabinet Office task force, and later through a cross Whitehall Disproportionate Impacts steering group chaired by a DG for the Department of Communities and Local Government. BEIS attended these meetings on a regular basis, along with other Departments.
- 11.2 The Cabinet Office Secretariat commissioned BEIS to present an assessment of the implications for home working and social distancing on BEIS' sectors, which was finalised on 24 March 2020. Information was gathered by engaging with contacts in certain industries and reviewing reporting data in respect of relevant transactions. Details are at SM/59, INQ000065317 and SM/60, INQ000064739. Based on the evidence available to BEIS at that time, the Department considered that industries that deployed labour-intensive production methods and relied on a workforce being present

³⁴ <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/kwasi-kwarteng-vaccine-hesitancy-black-community-b926964.html> (SM/186, INQ000146528)

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on site; and service-oriented industries were more likely to be more significantly affected by these measures. BEIS made an assessment of how heavily dependent each sector was on a workforce being present on site.

- 11.3 On 14 October 2020, BEIS provided a paper to Cabinet Office, following a Task Force commission, setting out options to address disproportionate impacts of Covid-19. It was noted in the paper that workers were disproportionately impacted by Covid-19 if their working sector exposed them to a higher chance of contracting Covid-19 or if they would face greater health risks if they contracted Covid-19. For example, information provided by Cabinet Office indicated that workers who are male, BAME, over 60 or have a set of underlying health conditions face a higher risk if they contract Covid-19. Sectors were identified as exposing workers to a potentially higher risk of contracting Covid-19. These included social care and close contact services, health care, hospitality and warehouse, transport, retail and construction, and food manufacturing. Further details are at SM/61, INQ000065319.
- 11.4 In response to a Cabinet Office commission in August 2021, BEIS provided a further paper setting out a range of measures that could potentially help mitigate disproportionate impacts. The Department sought guidance from No.10 Special Advisors in presenting these options. In the advice, BEIS noted that as well as immediate transmission and mortality risks there were wider secondary impacts, including the negative health and wellbeing impact of economic disruption, which should be considered as these were likely to disproportionately affect BAME workers.
- 11.5 The measures proposed by the Department ranged from actions which were in the process of being implemented at that time (such as the reduction of a curfew) and higher ambition actions which required additional funding from the Treasury to deliver (such as child-care support for those with self-isolating children). BEIS was required by Cabinet Office to take forward the most “cost-neutral” options, as further funding could not be provided by HMT to support these policies at this time. BEIS took forward measures wherever possible, including working with ACAS to establish an advice centre on employment rights for disabled people on 28 July 2021³⁵. The collated proposals are at SM/62, INQ000064961.

³⁵ <https://www.acas.org.uk/new-advice-hub-to-help-disabled-people-understand-their-rights-at-work> (SM/187, INQ000146529)

17. Section 12 - Data modelling

- 12.1 The Inquiry has asked about the production and dissemination of data modelling of aspects of the Covid-19 virus in which BEIS had an interest to the extent relevant to the overall scope of this Rule 9 Request. I have set material out below based upon a review of records held on BEIS systems and the best recollections of staff who worked on this area at the time. Some information is incomplete, for example full dissemination lists for analysis.
- 12.2 Much of the data modelling and data analysis work conducted by BEIS was commissioned by and provided to the Cabinet Office. Some examples, on which I provide further information below, include analysis on the business impact on workforces (workforce estimates), the transmission of the virus in nightclub settings and the impact on certification on the same sector. The Cabinet Office may however

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be better placed to address for the Inquiry what parts of these and other commissions were put before core decision makers.

12.3 The work that BEIS provided on economic assessment and intelligence products, in support of Cabinet Office and HMT, were, as set out in an email of 25 March 2020 from Alex Chisholm, then permanent secretary, to Mark Sedwill, then Cabinet Secretary:

- (a) *Daily dashboards from our Data Science team using ‘creative’ metrics of economic impacts and trends for businesses, consumers and households. Examples of that might be retail footfall; analysis of Google search terms; electricity demand (inferring working-from-home); car park occupancy; credit card usage; and online shopping.*
- (b) *Our macroeconomic dashboard with HMT, which includes information on financial markets, ONS data and some business surveys which is updated daily (currently around 7:15am) and accessible via this link: <https://help.cbias.cloud/EconomyDashboard/>*
- (c) *The business intelligence pack which will inform discussions and decisions at EBRG, which is already a cross-Whitehall effort and on which we are closely working with HMT.*
- (d) *Work on understanding and flagging ongoing sectoral and regional vulnerabilities and resilience, building on the Kingfisher³⁶ data sets, in the context of new interventions; and impacts that aren’t being mitigated by the introduction of economic policy measures, feeding into HMT-led work on monitoring effectiveness.*
- (e) *As well as those regular updates, our analytical teams are of course able to respond to ad hoc requests for high-level assessments of broad options at considerable pace – using and triangulating the evidence generated above but mainly drawing from what we know of economic activity and the economic importance of sectors and firms.” (Further detail at SM/63, INQ000066033)*

12.4 The Business Intelligence Pack or ‘dashboard’ was created following the establishment of a weekly cross-Whitehall business intelligence group, information gathered from contact with BEIS’ sector teams in combination with work undertaken by the Office for National Statistics and other sources of data. The Business

³⁶ Kingfisher was a joint HMT-BEIS project prior to the pandemic to consider the economic impacts of Exiting the European Trade Unions and potential mitigations for these.

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Intelligence pack or 'dashboard' was then provided to BEIS ministers and COBR. Further detail is at SM/64, INQ000066034.

- 12.5 The Business Intelligence dashboard, also described as 'the Weekly Economic Surveillance Sector and DA Intelligence Dashboard' provided a weekly summary of the impact on business sectors (such as education, farming and hospitality amongst many others). The dashboard was circulated to BEIS staff involved in the Covid-19 response and provided to Private Offices. It was created during the pandemic and has continued to be produced since.
- 12.6 In addition to an analysis on some of the risks regarding the impact of the pandemic on BEIS-related risks (for example relating to businesses and the economy), the Business Intelligence dashboard provided feedback collated on policies designed to assist businesses. This might have included, for example, feedback from the food and drink sector on the speed at which CBILS applications were being processed. It also provided business intelligence information, for example notifications of potential job losses, broken down by regions and in the Devolved Administrations. Further detail is at SM/65, INQ000066035.
- 12.7 Further to these regular assessment and intelligence products, BEIS created bespoke pieces of data analysis such as the Covid-19 Workforce Estimates analysis. This analysis was based on the ONS Business Impacts of Coronavirus Survey. For the period of April 2020 – December 2020 BEIS analysts provided information on, amongst other matters, the percentage of businesses trading and the percentage of workforces by sector that were remote working, furloughed or had been made redundant. The recipients of this analysis were the Cabinet Office as well as representatives of OGDs such as HMT and DfT. The analysis was provided every 2 weeks from the beginning of the pandemic to 11 January 2021. On 11 January 2021 recipients were notified that BEIS would no longer provide this analysis, primarily because by that time the Office of National Statistics were themselves publishing weighted summaries of the proportion of people furloughed, working on site and working remotely. Further details are at SM/66, INQ000066038, SM/66a, INQ000066039, SM/66b, INQ000066040, SM/66c, INQ000066041).
- 12.8 A further example of bespoke analysis provided by BEIS was the Covid-19 transmission in nightclubs modelling, full details of which can be found at SM/67, INQ000066045. BEIS analysts worked with the BEIS Chief Scientific Advisor Paul Monks to model the transmission risks in nightclubs. The conclusion of this modelling, with appropriate caveats (such as whether the analysis fully accounted for aerosol and

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surface transmissions and the lack of direct evidence on close contacts and secondary transmissions), was that without mitigations, a week of nightclubs operating would result in around 14% of primary infections in the population being attributable to transmissions in clubs. That figure was noted as being capable of being cut to 3% with the use of testing, masks and social distancing. Details can be found at SM/68, INQ000066048. The model was peer reviewed by the Rapid Assistance in Modelling the Pandemic initiative, an independent initiative set up by the Royal Society. Details can be found at SM/69, INQ000066049. The analysis was provided to DCMS rather than Cabinet Office and was noted in an interim report of the Events Research Programme. Full details can be found at SM/70, INQ000066050.

- 12.9 An additional example was a commission on the impact of nightclub certification (certification being the use of data on testing and vaccinations to determine whether people had a lower chance of transmitting Covid-19 to others). The analysis was commissioned by the Cabinet Office for the purposes of a ministerial group meeting on 7 September 2021 and sought the input of both DCMS and BEIS. The analysis provided information on the number of nightclub venues affected, the additional costs to those businesses of the use of certification, the anticipated changes to demand that certification may have on the demand for their services and the impact of alternatives to certification (i.e. closure) amongst other measurements and analyses.

Further details of Models and Analysis Products

- 12.10 My officials are currently working to collate relevant records relating to the analysis products referred to in this section, and therefore I have exhibited relevant material where it is currently available and can provide further information subsequently to the Inquiry.
- 12.11 Based in part on data created by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, BEIS also created a model that considered the impact of Covid-19 on the economy and the impact of NPI easing
- 12.12 Financial resilience models were created for BEIS by the management consultancy and business analytics firms Oliver Wyman, McKinsey and Experian. These can be found at SM/71, INQ000066051.
- 12.13 A Covid-19 impact analysis was created by Oliver Wyman in April 2020. The analysis sought to understand the expected impact of Covid-19 on key economic sectors, to inform policy making and to help inform the impact over time. The final report was to provide an analysis of the impact of the pandemic on profit and loss, balance sheet

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and the cashflows, to consider the impact of mitigating policy actions for each business sector and provide recommendations for the fine tuning of policy. This can be found at SM/72, INQ000066052.

- 12.14 A 'vulnerability map' was sought from an external provider: McKinsey. This map was to categorise the economy by business sector to show areas of the economy most exposed to Covid-19 restrictive and supportive measures, to highlight those sectors at highest risk and the impact of policies on them. Further details are at SM/73, INQ000065273.
- 12.15 BEIS' role in the provision and dissemination of data modelling was focused on the economic impacts of the pandemic and mitigating policies, which formed a part of the picture provided to decision makers. BEIS contributed to the provision and dissemination of that information as required by core decision makers.

18. Section 13 - Behaviour

- 13.1 The Inquiry has asked BEIS to set out to what extent, if at all, BEIS was involved in the provision of advice and briefings on the use of behavioural management, the use of public communications and the maintenance of public confidence in the response to the Covid-19 virus.
- 13.2 BEIS was designated by Cabinet office as lead department for supporting businesses' compliance with government policy and messaging delivered by Cabinet Office and No 10. As lead department for compliance one of BEIS' objectives was to ensure that businesses were following Covid-19-secure rules.

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- 13.3 In delivering on this project, BEIS worked with a number of OGDs as their input was key in identifying how compliance could be strengthened. The initial plan involved (a) developing a shared understanding of business obligations; (b) building a true picture of the level of compliance to decide how to prioritise efforts and (c) identifying potential risks and mitigation. The above is set out in the attached presentation which was delivered by BEIS' Covid-19 Programme Directorate on 17 March 2021. The presentation can be found at SM/42 - INQ000065239.
- 13.4 In short outline, the elements of the initial plan were as follows:
- a) **Developing a shared understanding** – this involved ensuring that departments and businesses understood their legal obligations;
 - b) **Compliance** – The data provided by HSE and OPSS suggested that businesses were mostly compliant. The indication was that approximately two thirds of businesses did not require formal enforcement action. BEIS developed a process by which to rate non-compliance and deal with enforcement. For instance, if a business was found to be generally compliant or where there had been a technical or accidental breach, the focus for BEIS would be to continue communications, provide clarity and guard against complacency. However, if dealing with deliberate or malicious non-compliance depending on the severity of the breach, a fixed penalty could be imposed and/or prosecution.
 - c) **identifying potential risks and mitigation** – BEIS identified risks and approaches to mitigate the risk.

19. Section 14 - Legislation and regulations

- 14.1 The Inquiry has asked to what extent BEIS was involved in advising on the public health and coronavirus legislation and regulations that were proposed and enacted, which were shared with or discussed with the Prime Minister / No 10, Cabinet and / or Cabinet Committees.

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14.2 BEIS was responsible for the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Obligations of Hospitality Undertakings) (England) Regulations. These were laid on 17 September 2020.

14.3 BEIS' legal department also assisted in providing legal advice, opinions and options in respect of the legal interpretation of regulations and legislation introduced, as well as advising on what changes should be made. This would often require BEIS' legal department to answer specific questions that had been raised in Parliament, from businesses or business sector associations. Whilst BEIS' primary focus was on the economic impact of these regulations, it was necessary to consider other issues such as NHS capacity and local infection rates.

14.4 Examples of general advice given include:

- The difference between therapies and medical treatments;
- How businesses could be repurposed, such as whether a nightclub can become an alternative hospitality venue;
- The extent that face covering legislation may be inferior to coverings required by certain professions;
- Whether and in what context was close contact in groups permitted;
- The extent to which hospitality venues could operate whilst minimising risk;
- Extending curtilage and licensing for hospitality venues.

14.5 BEIS contributed to the enactment of legislation and regulations. Some particular examples would be:

Legislation/Regulation	Overview of effect
The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (England) Regulations 2020	Travel exemptions for professional sports
The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020	Enabling public health measures to be taken for the purpose of reducing the public health risks arising from coronavirus.

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The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions (All Tiers) (England) Regulations 2020	Three-tier legal framework that was introduced in the first lockdown, with amendments to the restrictions within each tier.
Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Local Authority Enforcement Powers)	Enabled local authority designated officers to issue notices to individuals who are contravening or have contravened various statutory provisions in place to minimise exposure to coronavirus.

20. Section 15 - Relationship with Devolved Administrations (DAs)

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- 15.1 The Inquiry has asked for an explanation of the extent to which BEIS liaised with, or provided information to, the Devolved Administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland about key decisions on management of the pandemic.
- 15.2 As with any other major cross-cutting policy priorities, BEIS engaged the DAs and key stakeholders in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to help inform the Department's response to the pandemic and to ensure those responsible for delivering or disseminating messages remained informed. Policy teams across BEIS sought to factor the specific requirements of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland into their advice to ministers throughout the pandemic, and a range of engagement took place.
- 15.3 The key strategic discussions and forums with the Devolved Governments and the business community in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were convened by the BEIS Devolution & the Union team (**D&U team**). The team had existed since 2016 but was expanded in size and was established as a standalone team led by a Deputy Director in 2018 to focus on enabling BEIS to work effectively with the Devolved Governments on preparations for the UK's exit from the EU.
- 15.4 From March 2020, the team became involved in coordinating senior official and ministerial engagement between BEIS and the Devolved Governments on the pandemic response. The D&U Team considered matters relating to EU Exit and Covid-19 in parallel, because these two programmes of work were often linked, for example in terms of their implications for business trading conditions.
- 15.5 Specifically, the D&U Team's role was to facilitate dialogue between the four UK administrations and ensure the Devolved Governments' views were being considered in relation to BEIS areas of responsibility. This dialogue focused on the needs of, and engagement with, sectors and businesses, and not the health response. Cabinet Office was responsible for overall alignment between policies in England and the Devolved Nations.

Engagement by BEIS officials with the Devolved Governments and Businesses

- 15.6 The D&U team also supported senior official level engagement with the Devolved Governments by delivering a series of ministerial and senior official meetings in each nation with businesses. These meetings provided the opportunity to understand business concerns which then informed BEIS policy making.
- 15.7 Between March 2020 and July 2022, 26 meetings took place between relevant BEIS and HMT senior officials, and Devolved Government counterparts through the Economy Directors Forum. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss Covid-19

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- impacts and responses. As an overview, the meetings discussed the impacts of lockdowns and other interventions and issues on sectors, operational / delivery challenges, and support measures offered to businesses across the UK.
- 15.8 The meetings were organised to provide the Devolved Governments with the opportunity to discuss areas of mutual interest with the UK Government at senior official level.
- 15.9 The D&U team also supported coordinated engagement with the business community in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. From October 2020 this work fell under the D&U team's Stakeholder & Business Engagement Team. The team worked with businesses and business organisations in BEIS' priority sectors in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and aimed to build constructive and positive relationships by identifying communication opportunities, understanding their concerns and following up with policy teams when required, to ensure their experiences were considered. Its focus was on the recovery in priority sectors.

Engagement with Devolved Government Ministers - Covid-19 Business and Industry Interministerial Group

- 15.10 The Business and Industry Interministerial Group consisted of industry ministers from the UK Government (BEIS) and Devolved Governments (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). These meetings were initially established in April 2019, when the then BEIS Secretary of State (Rt. Hon. Andrea Leadsom) made a commitment to structured ministerial engagement sessions with her counterparts in the DAs, and for her ministerial team to chair a Business and Industry Quadrilateral meeting which, pre pandemic, initially met quarterly. The Interministerial Group was established in line with the recommendations of the review of intergovernmental relations by Lord Dunlop and the subsequent Intergovernmental Relations Review.
- 15.11 Following advice received from BEIS officials on the level of ministerial engagement to be established with counterparts in the Devolved Governments on the pandemic response, on 17 March 2020, the Secretary of State (Rt. Hon. Alok Sharma) determined that Minister Zahawi should lead fortnightly calls with the Devolved Governments on the economic impacts of Covid-19. Further details are at SM/75, INQ00065267 These meetings occurred under the mantle of the Business and Industry Interministerial Group, which became a much more regular forum during the pandemic than before due to the ever-changing nature of the scientific intelligence and business interventions. On 18 March 2020, Minister Zahawi had the first of these

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meetings with Fiona Hyslop MSP, Ken Skates AM and Diane Dodds MLA to discuss the response to Covid-19. Further details can be found at SM/76, INQ000065266, SM/77, INQ000065268 SM/78, INQ000065269 and SM/79, INQ000065270.

- 15.12 The Terms of Reference of the Business and Industry Interministerial Group were adapted to consider and consult on Covid-19 business planning and economic recovery, which included: *“supporting engagement in areas of shared interest across all business and industry policy areas, including economic strategies and Covid-19 responses.”* Details can be found at SM/80, INQ000065286.
- 15.13 A further 34 Business and Industry Quadrilateral meetings were organised and held. The agendas of these meetings were consistent and focused on agreed areas including a) operational/delivery challenges for business; b) business intelligence; c) business support; and d) economic recovery.

21. Section 16 - Lessons learned and Evaluation

- 16.1 The Inquiry has asked BEIS to identify and describe anything that worked well and also any difficulties or challenges encountered by the Department and its officials in supporting core political and administrative decision making and what steps, if any, were taken to address those difficulties or challenges. The Inquiry has also asked BEIS to provide a chronological list of any internal or external reviews, lessons learned exercises and other reports involving, authored, overseen or responded to by BEIS relating to any of the issues raised in the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 2 since January 2020, including but not limited to how BEIS responded to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 16.2 I would reflect personally that a key success for my department was the agility with which people and resources were able to be mobilised in order to respond to urgent priorities. Officials worked at pace to rapidly set up support schemes in order to mitigate the risk of insolvencies and the loss of jobs and livelihoods. The Vaccines Task Force was also set up at pace and the deployment of vaccines has successfully enabled the UK to transition to 'living with the virus' and to phasing out of the restrictions that had been in place. This was an important example of successful cross-Whitehall working between BEIS and DHSC officials, as well as effective collaboration with the private sector. As set out in this statement, over time structures and approaches evolved as we learned lessons and sought to streamline and improve ways of working.
- 16.3 On the delivery of the Covid-19 support schemes, I will set out full details of our lessons learned reflections in relation to the forthcoming module on this topic. I would like to note that my department has found cross-Whitehall collaboration in this area very useful - and particularly collaboration in the field of data and analytics between BEIS and HMRC.
- 16.4 I also reflect that there are a number of important areas of learning for BEIS and government as a whole. For example, as I explained in my evidence to Parliament in January 2022³⁷ on Bounce Back Loans specifically, a difficult trade off was made at the time between mitigating fraud risk and the speed of getting money out, and this has led to higher levels of fraud compared to previous loan guarantee schemes.

³⁷ <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/6671/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/> (SM/188, INQ000146530)

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- 16.5 A further area of learning was around the collaboration between Departments in decision making and then the implementation of decisions. For example, in general, my department enjoyed a productive working relationship with HMT. However, at times, the speed with which decisions were made by Treasury Ministers on the design of Covid-19 support schemes, and then announced, meant that BEIS officials found it challenging to ensure the schemes were fully ready for delivery with clear accompanying guidance for businesses.
- 16.6 Below I have summarised:
- (a) Initial lessons learned from the first phase of Covid-19 in 2020 including a 'critical friend' independent report.
 - (b) Further lessons learned from April 2022 including reflections on ways of working relevant to core political and administrative decision making.
 - (c) BEIS evaluation programmes.
- 16.7 During the pandemic, BEIS has periodically undertaken lessons learned reviews and used these to refine ways of working, both within the central Covid-19 coordination teams and within individual policy teams involved in, for example the delivery of Covid-19 support schemes. Wherever possible lessons learned have been acted upon and implemented - and details are set out below.
- 16.8 BEIS is also carrying out individual evaluations of the Department's main Covid-19 interventions in line with the Department's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. The findings of each evaluation will be published in due course and key learning from across the evaluations is being recorded by the Department's Central Monitoring and Evaluation Team. The Department is also carrying out an overarching programme evaluation that will look at the combined impact of BEIS' Covid-19 interventions, as set out further in paragraphs 16.29 - 16.38 below.
- 16.9 For the purposes of this statement, I have focussed on lessons learned in relation to Covid-19 decision making. I understand that a later module will review the economic response in further detail, and BEIS will provide full detail on the lessons learned in relation to economic support measures in the later module covering that area.
- 16.10 BEIS has not undertaken any evaluations of wider government strategy or approaches to the public health response - which are a matter for DHSC, Cabinet Office and other relevant departments.

Internal lessons learned exercise – July 2020

- 16.11 In July 2020 at the closure of the first Covid-19 coordination hub, and as part of establishing a permanent directorate with responsibility for Covid-19, BEIS undertook an informal lessons learned review of ways of working, and also an independent critical friend review.
- 16.12 The internal lessons learned exercise was commissioned by the Director for Covid-19 and produced an internal report in collaboration with all key policy and delivery teams across the Department. The exercise reviewed the Covid-19 response, the role of the SRO and senior management, the effectiveness of the coordination hub, what went well and what did not go well, and what could have been done differently.
- 16.13 Key findings of the lessons learned review included that:
- (a) Resourcing the new pressures of Covid-19 was a challenge across the Department, particularly in central coordination teams. Whilst the Department was able to mobilise staff, there were some delays getting resource in place, and initially some areas of the Department mobilised more staff than others due to availability/ease of mobilisation. The review recommended that a future mobilisation framework be set up to develop mechanisms for identifying and releasing non-critical resource. This has been taken forward and BEIS regularly re-prioritises and deploys staff to areas of new pressure, for example in response to the recent energy crisis.
 - (b) In terms of structure, the review recognised the Department did well to run an extensive programme of 15 projects covering 50 workstreams and 8 DG portfolios. However, there was recognition that this may have been too large and cross-cutting to run as a programme – and it may have been more effective to reduce the scope earlier. The review also recommended the development of standardised operating models based on BEIS learning from EU Exit and Covid-19, including a nominated single DG sponsor for the work. This was implemented and from July 2020-April 2022, Jo Shanmugalingam, Director General for Science, Innovation and Growth acted as lead sponsor.
 - (c) The review concluded that the Department could do more in sharing expertise arising from BEIS work with business sectors in order to support central policy making. For example, in sharing business insight and intelligence to help better target policies to influence business. BEIS sought to build on this insight in later work during the pandemic, for example as highlighted above, BEIS regularly

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shared analysis and information about business views to support Cabinet Office and HMT policy development.

16.14 A critical friend review was also undertaken by John Harkin, reporting to the Covid-19 Programme Board on 16 July 2020. A summary is at SM/81, INQ000065020. The review found good evidence that the programme was contributing to the Government's Covid-19 mitigation strategy and that it had the right aims and objectives to support the overall cross-Government Covid-19 response strategy. However, the review also identified areas for improvement particularly around ensuring clarity of the scope of the programme and identifying the right resources to support work on Covid-19 during autumn/winter 2020. A summary is included below:

- (a) *“The Programme needs to ensure that it is clear what planning assumptions are being actively followed at any point in time and consciously and clearly pivot to alternative assumptions in alignment with Cabinet Office and No 10. The current status needs to be clearly communicated to Programme stakeholders.*
- (b) *The Programme SRO should communicate the outcome of the ExCo decision that Vaccines has been removed from the Programme Scope.*
- (c) *Rationalise the scope of the Programme to support only ‘core work’ for Phase 2 and establish a robust dependency management regime across the Programme PMOs and relevant cross-departmental programmes.*
- (d) *As the Programme moves to Phase 2 and consideration is given to how the work is configured, time should be spent on clarifying roles and responsibilities of SROs across the Programme. This should be based on objectives and the ability to achieve the stated outcomes.*
- (e) *In addition, the future roles and responsibilities of the Central PMO should be reviewed and once agreed, clearly communicated across the Programme and to embedded PMOs. This should be done to help set clear expectations for all stakeholders.*
- (f) *The Programme should develop and agree the set of success criteria are going to be used to determine when each workstream has finished the Phase 1 work. The Programme should adopt a ‘completer / finish’ approach to assist this closure process and make a clearer transition to Phase 2 work.*
- (g) *The Programme should develop the initial BEIS Recovery Strategy by the end of July which includes robust operational workforce planning estimates.”*

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16.15 All the recommendations of the critical friend review were implemented by October 2020 and a subsequent report was presented to the Covid-19 programme board to confirm this, which can be found at SM/82, INQ000065025.

Further lessons learned from April 2022 including reflections on ways of working relevant to core political and administrative decision making.

16.16 In April 2022 Cabinet Office asked departments to share lessons learned from the pandemic, along with any wider reflections on ways of working. That month, BEIS produced a paper with reflections and shared these with Cabinet Office. These are summarised below based upon feedback from BEIS officials who worked on the central Covid-19 response.

Ways of Working

16.17 The rapid adoption of video calling meant that cross-Whitehall collaboration operated effectively during the pandemic and departments were able to work closely together even though staff were located at home for the majority of the time.

16.18 The positive aspects of technology adoption were at times offset by the emergence of less positive ways of working. For example, the speed at which material could be produced collaboratively meant that central commissions often had urgent deadlines. Meetings were sometimes put in the diary at short notice and removed or rescheduled also at short notice.

16.19 Due to the sensitivity of some materials, Cabinet Office handling guidance meant that circulation of some key documents was closely restricted at times. This meant that officials needed to find other ways of collaborating where papers could not be shared.

16.20 The Cabinet Office Taskforce Commission was a keyway in which work was conducted between the centre and departments. This would involve a Taskforce official emailing a department, or a set of departments, with a task, to be delivered by a set deadline. The assessment by BEIS officials involved in the lessons learned review considers that this worked well – it led to clear delivery expectations and enabled departments to obtain rapid clearance with Ministerial offices. Over time, however, the commissioning system was on occasion less systematic between the taskforce and departments. Explanations for questions asked, or the timeline suggested, were sometimes unclear and two-way communication could have been improved.

16.21 Cabinet Office continues to work effectively with BEIS in commissioning new information, building on the learning from and standard commissioning models

developed during the pandemic. For example, in November 2022 BEIS took part in Cabinet Office led winter contingency planning.

Working Safely guidance lessons learned

- 16.22 As set out in section 10 above the Working Safely guidance was a set of materials used by businesses and business representative organisations to operate safely during the pandemic.
- 16.23 Officials involved in working on the guidance considered that BEIS worked effectively with DCMS and Cabinet Office to ensure that guidance across business sectors was consistent.
- 16.24 The business community and Trade Unions have indicated that they valued the regular engagement from government in developing the guidance, although business and Trade Union stakeholders did not always fully agree with the policies expressed. There were also challenges; for example the legal status of the guidance was at times unclear (given the wider employment law framework) and businesses sometimes objected to the fact they were often expected to do something even though it was only 'in guidance'.
- 16.25 As I have already mentioned above, the high number of changes to the guidance was a source of concern to stakeholders, and a key area of learning. Businesses fed back that at times they found it difficult to keep up with the number of changes, and to be clear on what their responsibilities were.
- 16.26 A review of the Working Safely Guidance is being carried out as part of BEIS' overarching Covid-19 evaluation. This will draw upon monitoring and compliance data, as well as interviews with a small number of government officials and business representatives. The findings of this review are expected in Spring 2023.

Stakeholder engagement and business intelligence

- 16.27 The Government's ability to convene and engage with large numbers of external stakeholders was greatly increased by the adoption of video calling. This was useful when messages needed to be broadcasted quickly – such as a change in the Covid-19 rules. It also meant business engagement could take place much more frequently – including with ministers. Ministerial roundtable meetings, which would previously have taken many hours of careful Private Office choreography and logistical planning, became straightforward to arrange. For this reason, the amount of time spent talking to stakeholders increased, along with the absolute number and diversity of the businesses that could be reached.

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16.28 A positive consequence of this business-government closeness was that businesses were receptive to government requests for data and information. Stakeholders understood that they had a chance to influence policy, and so took the time to collate and provide detailed and commercially sensitive information. The other side of this positive outcome is that expectations of the amount of data available to government became elevated. At times this could mean that the Cabinet Office expected business stakeholders to be able to provide rapid information which was not always available.

BEIS Covid-19 Evaluation Programme

16.29 The purpose of the BEIS Covid-19 evaluation programme is to support accountability and transparency of public expenditure, to identify the impact that the interventions had and to ensure that key lessons are identified to support future policy.

16.30 On 13 May 2020, a Covid-19 Monitoring and Evaluation board (first meeting on 13 May 2020) was established to ensure that all areas of work were putting in place appropriate evaluation plans, and to provide oversight of these activities. The board comprised the Chief Economist (Chair) and senior analysts. An evaluation expert group comprised of working-level evaluation specialists was also formed to provide advice and scrutiny on more detailed aspects of individual Covid-19 intervention evaluation plans and ensure consistency between plans – this group met eight times between June 2020 to June 2021. Then a programme evaluation Steering Group was set up for the Covid-19 evaluation programme, comprising senior policy and analyst personnel from relevant teams to provide governance for this work. It first met on 26 February 2021 and continues to meet periodically.

16.31 A list of the individual Covid-19 scheme evaluations currently underway is provided in Annex I.

16.32 Four early reports have been published: for Corporate Insolvency and Governance (**CIGA**), Covid-19 Loan Guarantee Schemes, Future Fund and UKRI support. Further reports and updates will be published during the course of the next year. As these evaluations have just been published, BEIS policy teams are currently reflecting on the findings in order to consider how best to respond and implement these and this work is ongoing. The findings of the individual scheme evaluations may not be explicitly relevant to the work of this module, for example in relation to core decision making, but may be within scope of other modules.

16.33 BEIS also commissioned Ipsos (a research consultancy), on 20 July 2021 to carry out the initial stages of an overarching programme evaluation, which will provide an

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assessment of the Department's combined response to the Covid-19 pandemic, with a particular focus on its role in mitigating the economic impacts of the virus. This assessment will draw upon the individual evaluations of each key scheme delivered by BEIS, along with wider evidence from interviews and secondary data/evidence. A summary of the areas of review which were in and out of scope are included in a structure chart, which is at SM/83, **INQ000096923**.

16.34 The overarching programme evaluation Steering Group met on 12 January 2022 to review the proposed methodology and evaluation questions, detailed further at SM/84, **INQ000096934**. A draft report scoping out the methodology has been independently peer reviewed by experts through BEIS' evaluation peer review group function.³⁸

16.35 The aims and objectives of the overarching evaluation are closely linked to the evaluation of individual schemes. The Central Monitoring and Evaluation team has oversight of individual evaluations and are working closely with Ipsos to refine the evaluation research questions and methodology iteratively as the individual evaluations progress.

16.36 The broad areas the overarching process evaluation aims to look at are:

- Strength of strategic and operational direction
- Speed of response
- Resource allocation processes
- Knowledge exchange and communication
- Equity and distributional impacts
- Lessons learned

16.37 The broad areas that the overarching impact evaluation aims to answer are:

- Short-term effect on business survival, employment, unemployment, and re-opening
- Stability of the research and innovation system

³⁸ The BEIS Peer Review Group (PRG) is comprised of independent evaluation experts. PRG members are mainly academic experts in evaluation. This independent scrutiny provides assurance of quality and increases the credibility of our work.

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- Economic transformation (decarbonisation and development of domestic vaccine industry)
- Public health impacts and other social benefits
- Adverse/unintended consequences (e.g. effects on competition)

16.38 The current proposed methodology is outlined below, however this is evolving as the evaluation progresses and in response to the outputs from individual evaluations:

- Meta-evaluation: aggregating and comparing individual evaluations
- Additional Research: Addressing gaps in evidence base
- (Optional – still to be determined) Macro-economic modelling: using econometric findings and scenario analysis to estimate BEIS' total economic impact

16.39 I would also be happy to provide further details to the Inquiry of this overarching evaluation once available next year.

22. Section 17 - Conclusion

- 17.1 In seeking to provide answers to the questions raised by the Inquiry, this statement necessarily contains much factual information, with many references to the workings of the machinery of BEIS and Government more widely. I am acutely conscious of the grave Covid-19 impacts underlying the Inquiry's task. Alongside our own implementation of necessary changes and the evaluation of further improvements, I and my Department will continue to work with the Inquiry to provide it with all necessary assistance in its investigation of what happened, and in relation to its recommendations for the future.
- 17.2 Following the drafting of this statement but before final signature, there was a further Machinery of Government change. On 7 February 2023, BEIS was closed and three new departments created. The new departments are: Department for Business and Trade (led by Permanent Secretary Gareth Davies), Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (led by Permanent Secretary Jeremy Pocklington) and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (led by me, Sarah Munby). To avoid complicating matters I have not amended the statement to reflect the recent change.

23. Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

Personal Data

Signed:

Dated: 25 May 2023

24.
25. List of Annexes

- Annex A – Biographies of Permanent Secretaries
- Annex B – Chronology
- Annex C – Key materials
- Annex D – Secretaries of State, Ministers of State, Parliamentary Under Secretaries of State
- Annex E – BEIS Special Advisers, Permanent Secretaries, Directors General and Directors January 2020 to March 2022
- Annex F – Summary of restrictions for the first national lockdown
- Annex G – Timeline of restrictions imposed
- Annex H - A list of key updates to Working Safely Guidance
- Annex I – Overview of Covid-19 scheme evaluations currently being undertaken
- Annex J – Module 2 Sharepoint statistics
- Annex K – Summary of key terms and acronyms
- Annex L – List of BEIS Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Assessments
- Annex M – Coordination of policy development and deliver organogram as at April 2020

26. Annex A: Biographies of Permanent Secretaries

Alex Chisholm



Alex Chisholm started his working life as a civil servant in 1990, specialising in competition policy and the media, communications and financial services sectors at the Department of Trade and Industry and Office of Fair Trading until 1997. He then worked for three years for Pearson plc and the Financial Times, before spending some years working for technology companies, eCountries Inc and Ecceleration Ltd.

In 2007, Alex Chisholm was appointed as a commissioner of the Commission for Communications Regulation in Ireland, becoming its Chair in February 2010. On 8 January 2013, he became the first Chief Executive of the Competition and Markets Authority.

Alex Chisholm was appointed as Permanent Secretary to DECC in 2016 and continued as Permanent Secretary for BEIS after it was created nine days later in September 2016 by merging DECC and BIS.

Alex Chisholm became Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service and Permanent Secretary for the Cabinet Office on 14 April 2020. This means that he is responsible for Civil Service reform and for leadership and governance of the Cabinet Office.

Sam Beckett



Sam became Second Permanent Secretary at the ONS and the Deputy Chief Executive at the UK Statistics Authority in September 2020. In this role, Sam looks after Economic, Social and Environmental Statistics, alongside Corporate Services. She is also joint head of the Government Economic Service. Directly prior to ONS, she was acting Permanent Secretary at BEIS, where, among other things, she oversaw the Covid-19 response. Prior to that she

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was the DG at BEIS for Trade, Europe and Analysis and was responsible for the Department's EU-exit preparations.

Sam Beckett has over 25 years of experience within the Civil Service; she has worked across a range of departments, including the Ministry of Defence, HMT, Cabinet Office, Home Office and DCMS. These roles have included micro and macro-economics, strategy, policy and corporate services delivery.

Sarah Munby



Sarah Munby started her career working at Defra, as an Assistant Economist. She later worked for the management consultancy McKinsey for fifteen years, where she led their Strategy and Corporate Finance practice in the UK and Ireland. She joined BEIS in July 2019 as DG, Business Sectors. Sarah Munby became Permanent Secretary for BEIS on 20 July 2020. After MoG changes that closed BEIS, Sarah Munby became Permanent Secretary for the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology on 7 February 2023.

27. Annex B - Chronology

28. Annex C: Key materials

Below is a list of key materials included:

- a) Action points and summaries from meetings
- b) Emails documenting key decisions
- c) Key guidance documents
- d) Legislation
- e) Letters
- f) Meeting agendas
- g) Ministerial briefing presentations
- h) Ministerial briefings
- i) Ministerial submissions
- j) Minutes of meetings
- k) Press releases
- l) Reports
- m) Team structures / organograms
- n) Text of key speeches

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29. **Annex D: Secretaries of State, Ministers of State, Parliamentary Under Secretaries of State**
30. This list covers the period specified in the rule 9 request 2020-2022.

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	The Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP	July 2019 – February 2020
	The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP	February 2020 – January 2021
	The Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP	January 2021 – September 2022
Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth and Climate Change	The Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP	July 2019 – January 2021
	The Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP	January 2021 – September 2021
	The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP	September 2021 – September 2022
Minister of State for Investment	Lord Grimstone of Boscobel (jointly with International Trade)	March 2020 – July 2022
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility to February 2020, Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets from February 2020	Kelly Tolhurst MP	July 2018 – February 2020
	Paul Scully MP	February 2020 – July 2022
	Jane Hunt MP	July 2022 – September 2022
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Business and Industry)	Nadhim Zahawi MP also Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Covid Vaccine Deployment) at the DHSC from (from November 2020 – September 2021)	July 2019 – September 2021
	Lee Rowley MP	September 2021 – July 2022
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Science, Research and Innovation	Amanda Solloway MP	February 2020 – September 2021
	George Freeman MP	September 2021 – July 2022
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Climate Change)	Lord Duncan of Springbank (jointly with Northern Ireland Office)	July 2019 – February 2020
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Business, Energy and Corporate Responsibility)	Lord Callanan	February 2020 – present

31. Annex E: BEIS Special Advisers, Permanent Secretaries, Directors General and Directors

32. January 2020 to March 2022

Special Advisers

Name	Start Date	End Date
Alex Hitchcock	30/04/2020	31/03/2021
Natasha Adkins	14/02/2020	19/10/2022
Celia McSwain	11/06/2020	06/09/2022

Permanent Secretaries

Name	Role	Start Date	End Date
Alex Chisholm	Permanent Secretary	2016	April 2020
Sam Beckett	Acting Permanent Secretary	April 2020	July 2020
Sarah Munby	Permanent Secretary	July 2020	February 2023

Directors General

Name	Role	Start Date	End Date
Paul Monks	Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA)	Pre-January 2020	Ongoing
Joanna Whittington	Energy and Security - Emergency Response	February 2020	Ongoing
Jo Shanmugalingam	Science, Innovation, and Growth	Pre-January 2020	Ongoing
David Bickerton	Business Sectors	August 2021	Ongoing
Mike Keoghan	Business Sectors – acting DG	September 2020	30-Jul-21
Sarah Munby	Business Sectors	July 2019	July 2020

Directors

Name	Role	Start Date	End Date
Emma Floyd	C19 Programme Directorate	July 2020	July 2021
Jessica Skilbeck	C19 Programme Directorate	July 2020	August 2021
	Labour Market	April 2020	May 2020
Emily Bourne	C19 Coordination Hub	March 2020	July 2020
Catherine Bremner	C19 Coordination Hub	March 2020	July 2020
Ben Golding	C19 Coordination Hub	March 2020	July 2020
Helen Shirley-Quirk	C19 Coordination Hub	May 2020	July 2020
Greg Falconer	C19 Response and Hospitality	July 2021	March 2022
Mike Warren	Labour Market	August 2020	Ongoing

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Chris Thompson	Labour Market	Pre-January 2020	February 2020
Tom Griffiths	Labour Market	February 2020	August 2020
Jenny Dibden	LAG - Funding Delivery and Shocks	March 2020	March 2021
Mike Keoghan	LAG - Chief Analyst	January 2019	January 2022
Carl Creswell	Services	April 2019	Ongoing

33.

34.

35. **Annex F: Summary of restrictions for the first national lockdown**

The first national lockdown lasted from March 2020 to June 2020. The regulations were introduced via The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 and its subsequent amendments which came into force 26 March 2020 until 4 July 2020 (the **Regulations**)

Under the regulations:

- A break of a requirement or restriction under the Regulations was an offence which could be prosecuted on.
- A relevant person (being a constable, a police community support officer or a person designated by the Secretary of State for the purposes of the regulation) have the power to:
 - Require the closure of premises and businesses;
 - Restrict certain business activities;
 - Restrict movement; and
 - Restrict gatherings.
- Non-essential retailers and hospitality businesses such as pubs and restaurants were told to close.
- Individuals were permitted to leave their home for limited purposes, including:
 - Shopping for necessities;
 - One form of eservice a day;
 - Any medical need;
 - Travelling to and from work but only where this was necessary and could not be done from home; and
 - Not to meet with others who do not live in your home.

36. Annex G: Timeline of restrictions imposed

Timeline of restrictions

Whilst guidance varied across the nations and regions of the UK at different times, below is a summary of the main periods of the “lockdown” restrictions:

First national lockdown (26 March 2020 – 10 May 2020): People were ordered to stay at home, permitted to leave for essential reasons only. The laws were slowly relaxed from May 2020 as follows:

- Prime Minister’s statement on 10 May 2020 encouraging those who cannot work from home to return to work but to avoid public transport if at all possible;
- Phased re-opening of schools in England from 1 June 2020;
- Non-essential shops re-open in England from 15 June 2020

Minimal lockdown restrictions (23 June 2020 – 21 September 2020): businesses were focused on opening “Covid securely”. Gatherings of up to thirty people were permitted.

Reimposing of restrictions (22 September 2020 – 31 October 2020): gatherings of no more than six were permitted. Local restrictions applied across England, using a three-tier system.

Second national lockdown (5 November 2020 – 1 December 2020): non-essential high street businesses were closed and people were prohibited from meeting those not in their “support bubble”

Introduction of a tiered system (2 December 2020 – 4 January 2021): restrictions on hospitality became stricter. A fourth tier was introduced following concerns of a new variant. By 30 December 2020, 75% of the country was placed under tier four restrictions.

Third national lockdown (6 January 2021 – 29 March 2021): similar rules to the first lockdown applied. A small number of gatherings were exempted from the gathering bans (e.g. religious services and small weddings).

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Leaving lockdown/'Roadmap to Recovery' (8 March 2021 – 19 July 2021): The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, made a speech on 22 February 2021, mapping out the roadmap out of lockdown, with the aim of “cautiously but irreversibly” easing restrictions.³⁹

³⁹ PM statement on living with COVID: 21 February 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (SM/164, INQ000146514)

37. Annex H: A list of key updates to Working Safely Guidance

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Exhibits</u>
11/05/2020	Guidance publication	BEIS publishes guidance on 'Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)'. 	INQ000065408 (SM/85) In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/86)
13/05/2020	Recovery Strategy (lifting restrictions step by step)	Step 1 of the strategy to lift restrictions begins.	INQ000065339 (SM/87)
25/05/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect industry feedback and cover non-essential retail businesses ahead of planned opening at Step 2 of the reopening roadmap.	INQ000065344 (SM/88) In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/89)
29/05/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to include details on test and trace.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/90)
Across June 2020	BEIS ran an informal consultation exercise with hospitality, personal care and retail		
01/06/2020	Recovery Strategy (lifting restrictions)	Step 2a comes into force – outdoor retail and car showrooms reopened and up to 6 people permitted to meet outdoors.	INQ000065357 (SM/91)

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			INQ000065420 (SM/92)
05/06/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance for outdoor hospitality published.	
09/06/2020	Key Announcement	BEIS Secretary of State (Alok Sharma) made a statement on Step 2b, including on the Safer Working guidance.	INQ000065346 (SM/34)
15/06/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect industry feedback, guidance on test and trace service, guidance on safer travel and to provide guidance on managing security risks.	<u>In National Archives</u> (SM/94)
15/06/2020	Recovery Strategy (lifting restrictions)	Step 2b comes into force – remaining non-essential retail permitted to reopen subject to meeting Covid-secure guidelines.	INQ000065409 (SM/95) INQ000065420 (SM/92)
Summer 2020	Guidance live iterative updates in consultation with stakeholders	The guidance was treated as a live document. The BEIS team would collate stakeholder comments into spreadsheets (& change log) and discuss them weekly with PHE and HSE. They would then periodically update when given SoS approval.	
23/06/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to add new guidance for close contact services and the hospitality sector ahead of planned reopening at Step 3.	INQ000065410 (SM/97) <u>In National Archives</u> (SM/98)

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23/06/2020	Key Announcement	Move from 2m rule to 1m+ and confirmation of move to Step 3 on 4 July 2020.	INQ000065411 (SM/99)
24/06/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect the change to the 2m rule and add guidance on support bubbles.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/100)
03/07/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to add guidance on local lockdowns, discouraging shouting, keeping records of staff/visitors, and what to do in the event of a Covid outbreak in the workplace.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/101)
04/07/2020	Recovery Strategy (lifting restrictions)	Step 3 comes into force – some personal care (hair salons and barbers) and hospitality (food service providers, pubs, accommodation) businesses permitted to reopen.	INQ000065411 (SM/99) INQ000065421 (SM/103)
09/07/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to permit all close contact businesses to reopen from 13 July 2020 with some restrictions and add guidance on entertainment permitted in hospitality venues.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/104)
10/07/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to include guidance on mass gatherings in the workplace.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/105)
23/07/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect changes to the rules on working from home and when to wear face coverings. Guidance on mass gatherings, ventilation, disposing of face coverings,	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/106)

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		PPE and work-related travel also amended.	
31/07/2020	Key Announcement	PM announces a two-week delay to the lifting of restrictions.	INQ00065413 (SM/107)
31/07/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated on protecting people who are at higher risk - from 1 August 2020, clinically extremely vulnerable individuals can go to the workplace as long as it is COVID-secure but should carry on working from home wherever possible.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/108)
12/08/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated on consulting the workforce before returning to work, protecting people who are at higher risk and where to wear face coverings.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/109)
13/08/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect that all close contact services, including those in the highest risk zone, can restart from 15 August 2020. Practitioners must now wear a visor and mask. Customers must now wear face coverings.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/110)
09/09/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to add section on priority actions to take to protect staff and clients.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/111)
10/09/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated on social gatherings of more than 6 people and mandatory test and trace requirements.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/112)
11/09/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to add priority actions to take to protect staff and customers.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/113)

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22/09/2020	PM Statement	PM announced a package of tougher National measures – early closing for pubs, bars; table service only; closing businesses that are not covid secure; expanding the use of face coverings, and new fines for those that fail to comply; office workers to work from home if they can; rule of six indoors and outdoors.	INQ000065358 (SM/36)
24/09/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated on working from home, supporting staff to self-isolate, and (for close contact services) mandatory PPE for staff.	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/115)</u>
01/10/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated on regulation changes, customers and staff wearing face coverings, customers dancing and singing (for hospitality).	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/116)</u>
14/10/2020	Restrictions	Three tiered local Covid alert levels come into force.	INQ000065423 <u>(SM/117)</u>
15/10/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect the launch of Local Covid Alert Levels.	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/118)</u>
31/10/2020	Key Announcement	PM announces National lockdown from 5 November 2020	INQ000065414 <u>(SM/119)</u>
04/11/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated in advance of National restrictions from 5 November 2020.	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/120)</u>
05/11/2020	Restrictions	National restrictions come into force. 'Circuit break'.	
09/11/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to further reflect National restrictions – hospitality venues like restaurants, bars	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/121)</u>

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		<p>and pubs must close but can still provide takeaway and delivery services. Anyone who can work from home, should and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals should not attend work if they can't work from home for this period of restrictions.</p> <p>Guidance left intact but noted at the front that not all applied as National restrictions applied.</p>	
23/11/2020	Key Announcement	PM announces Winter Plan	INQ000065360 (SM/40)
26/11/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to add new local restriction tiers and the COVID-19 Winter Plan	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/123)</u>
13/12/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated on self-isolation guidance for contacts of individuals who test positive. Self-isolation period now 10 days instead of 14.	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/124)</u>
21/12/2020	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated with reference to local restriction tiers and protecting people who are at higher risk.	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/125)</u>
04/01/2021	Key Announcement	PM announces National lockdown from 5 January 2021	INQ000065415 <u>(SM/126)</u>
06/01/2021	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to reference National restrictions from 6 January 2021.	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/127)</u>
10/02/2021	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to add guidance on tests and vaccinations.	In <u>National Archives</u> <u>(SM/128)</u>
22/02/2021	Key Announcement	Roadmap out of lockdown published.	INQ000065416 <u>(SM/129)</u>

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30/03/2021	Guidance Update	Safer Working guidance updated to add information on ventilation, tests and the roadmap setting out how Covid-19 restrictions will be eased.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/130)
12/04/2021	Roadmap (reopening) Guidance update	Step 2 of the roadmap comes into force. Safer Working guidance updated to reflect Step 2 of the roadmap – non-essential retail, outdoor hospitality and close contact services can reopen.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/131)
04/05/2021	Guidance update	Safer Working guidance updated to add guidance for Step 3 of the roadmap, giving businesses two weeks' notice.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/132)
17/05/2021	Roadmap (reopening) Guidance update	Step 3 of the roadmap comes into force. Safer Working guidance updated to reflect the move to Step 3.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/133)
09/06/2021	Feedback Request	The team mocked up draft Step 4 guidance and shared it with a smaller number of Chief Executives for their feedback.	INQ000065243 (SM/134)
14/06/2021	Key Announcement	PM announces a 4-week pause at Step 3 until 19 July 2021	INQ000065417 (SM/135)
20/06/2021	Roadmap (reopening)	Step 3 regulations extended to 4 weeks.	
05/07/2021	Key Announcement	Prime Minister set out a five-point plan for living with Covid from 19 July 2021, if Step 4 takes place (final decision to be announced on 12 July 2021).	INQ000065418 (SM/136)

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08/07/2021	Roundtable with B5 and TUC	Chaired by Covid-19 Director– to discuss updates on key workstreams and comments from attendees on the 19 July 2021 plan.	INQ000065144 (SM/137) INQ000065149 (SM/138)
14/07/2021	Guidance Publication	Working Safely guidance published for Step 4	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/139)
18/07/2021	Roadmap (reopening)	Step 4 of the roadmap comes into force.	
16/08/2021	Guidance update	Working Safely guidance updated to reflect that people who are fully vaccinated no longer need to self-isolate if they have had close contact with someone who has Covid-19.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/140)
14/09/2021	Key Announcement	Autumn and Winter Plan published	INQ000065168 (SM/141)
21/09/2021	Request for feedback from stakeholders	Email sent to stakeholders seeking feedback on the Working Safely guidance following the publication of the COVID-19 Autumn-Winter Plan.	INQ000065166 (SM/142) INQ000065183 (SM/143) INQ000065172 (SM/144) INQ000065169 (SM/145) INQ000065425 (SM/146)
15/10/2021	Roundtable with B5 and TUC	Covid-19 Director provided an update on the development of the Autumn/Winter plan and revision of the Working Safely guidance.	INQ000065174 (SM/147) INQ000065177 (SM/148)

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09/11/2021	Guidance update	Guidance updated in response to September 2021 feedback from stakeholders.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/149)
12/11/2021	Roundtable with B5 and TUC	Covid-19 Director gave updates on Plan A (steering the country through Autumn/Winter with a focus on pharmaceutical interventions) and guidance changes as well as progress on 'Plan B' (measures to control transmission while minimising social/economic impacts if the NHS looks likely to come under unsustainable pressure) preparations, including setting out details of the policy.	INQ000065186 (SM/150) INQ000065187 (SM/151)
01/12/2021	Roundtable with B5 and TUC	Covid-19 Director updated attendees on the impending move to Plan B due to the Omicron variant and publication of new guidance.	INQ000065192 (SM/152)
08/12/2021	Restrictions Guidance update	Prime Minister confirms move to Plan B due to the Omicron variant. Working Safely guidance updated to reflect move to Plan B	INQ000065419 (SM/153) In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/154)
12/12/2021	Guidance update	Working Safely guidance updated to reflect working from home from 13 December 2021.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/155)
11/01/2022	Guidance update	Working Safely guidance updated to reflect that people who test positive on a lateral flow test don't need a confirmatory PCR test.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/156)

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21/01/2022	Guidance update	Working Safely guidance updated to reflect the fact that workers don't need to work from home and can return to the workplace.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/157)
24/02/2022	Guidance update	Working Safely guidance updated to remove all legal measures on self-isolation.	In <u>National Archives</u> (SM/158)
07/03/2022	Request for feedback from stakeholders	Email sent to stakeholders requesting views from employers and businesses on the future approach to managing COVID-19 risk in the workplace.	INQ000065232 (SM/159) INQ000065235 (SM/160) INQ000065241 (SM/49)
01/04/2022	Call with B5 and TUC	Led by Covid-19 Director to check in with the group following the publication of the Principles for Employers and update the group on the changes to guidance, as well as the changes to COVID response within Government.	INQ000065240 (SM/162)
29/04/2022	End of BEIS Involvement with Guidance	Responsibility for the guidance moves formally to the UK Health and Security Agency. BEIS Covid-19 Directorate closes.	

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38. Annex I: Overview of Covid-19 scheme evaluations currently being undertaken

Evaluation / Reviews Underway	Next Estimated Milestone of Reviews / Evaluation - liable to change	Published Outputs To Date
Local Authority Covid-19 Business Support Grants	Process Evaluation and Interim Impact Evaluation – Expected early 2023	None.
Trade Credit Reinsurance scheme (TCR)	Process Evaluation and Interim Impact Evaluation – Expected late 2022 / early 2023	None.
UKRI and BEIS – Research Stabilisation	Process Evaluation and Early Impact Evaluation – Expected late 2023	None.
UKRI – R&I support	Final Impact and Economic Evaluation – Expected late 2022 / early 2023	Process Evaluation (SM/189, INQ000146531)
Debt Guarantee Schemes (CBILS, CLBILS, BBLs),	Year 2 Evaluation Report – Expected Spring/Summer 2023	Year 1 Report (SM/190, INQ000146545)
Future Fund	Year 2 evaluation to be finalised by April 2023. Publication – expected Spring/Summer 2023.	Early Assessment Report (SM/191, INQ000146532)
Safer Workplace Guidance	High Level Review – Expected Spring/Summer 2023	None.

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Corporate Insolvency and Governance	Post Implementation Regulatory Review – Expected Summer 2023	Interim Report (SM/192, INQ000146533)
Vaccine Task Force	Timings still to be confirmed	None.
Innovate UK Continuity Grants	Final Impact Evaluation – Expected late 2023/Early 2024 (internal process evaluation work and interim/baseline work has been completed but have not been published)	None.
Green Home Grants Vouchers	Process Evaluation, Interim Outcome Evaluation and Economic Evaluation – Expected Late 2022/ Early 2023 Final Outcome and Economic Evaluation – Late 2023	None.
Local Authority Delivery Scheme	Final Evaluation Report – Expected Late 2023	None.
Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund	Final Evaluation Report – Expected 2024	None.
Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator	Evaluation – Expected Late 2022 / Early 2023	None.

39. Annex J: Module 2 SharePoint statistics

Search Ref	SharePoint Site	Number of items found in search	Search Volume	50% Expanded Volume
BEISM2 - 1.2	Labour Markets	18,313	16,319 GB	24,480 GB
BEISM2 - 2	Labour Markets - Employment Rights and Enforcement	968	1015.52 GB	1.524 GB
BEISM2 - 3.1	Services Sector Analysis - 03 - Sectoral vulnerabilities and Modelling	272	459.58 MB	690 MB
BEISM2 - 3.2	Services Sector Analysis - Transfer and Store	36	3.12 MB	4.70 MB
BEISM2 - 3.3	Services Sector Analysis - 06 - Safer workplaces	1198	1.7 GB	2.55 GB
BEISM2 - 3.4	Services Sector Analysis - 07 - International comparisons	97	3.4 GB	5.1 GB
BEISM2 - 3.5	Services Sector Analysis - 08 - Types of workers	275	1 GB	1.5 GB
BEISM2 - 3.6	Services Sector Analysis - 08 - Types of workers	23	13.16 MB	20 MB
BEISM2 - 3.7	Services Sector Analysis - 11 - Student project	12	76.32 MB	115 MB
BEISM2 - 3.8	Services Sector Analysis - 12 - Tiering review	6	44.5 MB	67 MB
BEISM2 - 3.9	Services Sector Analysis - Transfer and Store	89	73.21 MB	110 MB
BEISM2 - 14	Professional & Business Services Team - Hospitality – General	263	198.1 MB	298 MB
BEISM2 - 15	Professional & Business Services Team - Hospitality - battle plan	33	1.5 MB	2.25 MB
BEISM2 - 12.1	Professional & Business Services Team - Working from Home (WFH)	843	397.7 MB	597 MB
BEISM2 - 13.1	Professional & Business Services Team – Retail	160	40.97 MB	62 MB
BEISM2 - 18	M2 Statement Exhibits Transfer	55	28.6 MB	42.9 MB
BEISM2 - 19	M2 Chronology Exhibits Transfer	458	118.6 MB	177.9 MB

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BEISM2 - 20	Module 2 Statement Exhibits - Tranche 2	11	5.8 MB	8.7 MB
BEISM2 - 21	Module 2 Statement Exhibits – PDF’s	70	30.9 MB	47 MB
BEISM2 - 22	Module 2 Exhibits Extra Docs - Tranche 3	27	11.4	17.1 MB
			Total	26.751 GB

40. Annex K: Summary of key terms and acronyms

Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLS)

The BBLS was established in May 2020 to provide financial support to smaller UK businesses that were losing revenue and seeing their cashflow disrupted as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The scheme provided loans of between £2k and 25% of a business' turnover (up to a maximum of £50,000), repayable over six years. It operated with a cut down application process, using a 'simple, quick, standard form', which relied on borrower self-certification for some questions. The scheme removed the requirement for lenders to carry out credit checks, although borrowers were subject to Know Your Customer and Anti Money Laundering checks.

The scheme was designed to get money to businesses as quickly and seamlessly as possible. This followed feedback from stakeholders that CBILS was not getting money to businesses soon enough. While developing the scheme it was made clear that there was a trade-off between building an easy and quick to access scheme and implementing robust counter fraud controls.

BEIS – Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

BEIS is a ministerial government department, which was created on 14 July 2016. The Department was created through a machinery of government change and following the merger of the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Department of Energy and Climate Change. BEIS is responsible for government policy in the following areas: business; industrial strategy; science, research and innovation; energy and clean growth; and climate change.

BIS – Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

BIS is a ministerial department focused on leading economy-wide transformation by backing enterprise and long-term growth, generating cheaper, cleaner energy and developing the UK as a science superpower through innovation.

CabSec – Cabinet Secretariat

The Cabinet Secretariat provided assistance to the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and its Committees, and worked to ensure coordination across government departments. CabSec(O) meetings would normally be attended by the Permanent Secretary, but over time were delegated to Directors General and Directors with expertise in the topic under discussion.

CBILS - Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

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The CBILS was designed to provide financial support to smaller businesses across the UK that were losing revenue, and seeing their cashflow disrupted, due to the Covid-19 outbreak. CBILS was announced as part of a raft of measures to support businesses experiencing lost or deferred revenues and reflects the Government's recognition of the difficulties that many ordinarily profitable businesses found themselves in as a result of the global pandemic.

CLBILS - Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme

The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) was introduced by the Government in April 2020.

CLBILS was designed to provide finance to mid-sized and larger UK businesses with a group turnover of more than £45 million (the upper limit for CBILS, which focused on smaller businesses) that were suffering disruption to their cashflow due to lost or deferred revenues during the Covid-19 outbreak.

CNI – Critical National Infrastructures

CNI's are those facilities, systems, sites, information, people, networks and processes necessary for a country to function and on which daily life depends or need protection due to the potential danger to the public. There are 13 CNI's in the UK; Chemicals, Civil Nuclear, Communications, Defence, Emergency Services, Energy, Finance, Food, Government, Health, Space, Transport and Water.

BEIS has responsibility for energy, civil nuclear, chemicals, space and postal services.

COBR – Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms

COBR is shorthand for the Civil Contingencies Committee that is convened to handle matters of national emergency or major disruption.

CONOPS – Central Government's Concept of Operations

CONOPS sets out the arrangements for responding to and recovering from emergencies, irrespective of cause or location. It describes how the UK central government response will be organised, and the relationship between the central, regional and local tiers in England, as well as the relationship between the UK central government and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Corporate Insolvency and Governance Bill

An Act to make provision about companies and other entities in financial difficulty; and to make temporary changes to the law relating to the governance and regulation of companies and other entities.

Covid-O – Operations Committee

A committee set up to *“drive delivery and provide assurance on the UK-wide implementation across key lines of operation: Smart lockdowns, Supply and Capacity, Vaccines and*

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Treatments, a Covid Resilient Economy, Vulnerability". Covid-O meetings were attended by ministers were referred to as Covid-O(M), whilst officials' meetings were referred to as Covid-O(O).

Covid-S – Strategy Committee

Committee set up to “drive the Government’s strategic response to Covid-19, considering the impact of both the virus and [BEIS]’ response to it, and setting the direction for [BEIS]’ recovery strategy”. Ministerial strategy meetings were referred to as Covid-S(M), whilst officials’ meetings were referred to as Covid-S(O).

D&U team – Devolution and the Trade Unions team

A team which has existed since 2016 and subsequently expanded and established as a standalone team to focus on enabling BEIS to work effectively with the Devolved Governments on preparations for the UK’s exit from the EU.

DCMS - Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

DCMS is a ministerial department that protects and promotes cultural and artistic heritage and helps businesses and communities grow by investing in innovation.

DECC – Department of Energy and Climate Change

DECC is a ministerial department which seeks to lead economy-wide transformation by backing enterprise and long-term growth, generating cheaper, cleaner, homegrown energy and making the UK a science superpower through innovation.

Defra – Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

Defra is a ministerial department responsible for improving and protecting the environment.

DfE – Department for Education

DfE is a ministerial department responsible for children’s services and education within the UK

DfT – Department for Transport

DfT is a ministerial department which works to support the transport network within the UK.

DG – Director General

Director Generals are senior civil servants. Their areas of responsibility included DG for Business Service, DG for Science, Innovation and Growth, and DG for the Vaccine Task Force.

DHSC – Department of Health and Social Care

DHSC is a ministerial department which supports ministers in leading the nation’s health and social care to help people live more independent, healthier lives.

DLUHC – Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (formerly the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government)

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DLUHC is a ministerial department which supports communities across the UK to thrive, with the aim of making them great places to live and work.

DMC – Decision Making Committee

EBRMIG – Economic and Business Response Ministerial Implementation Group

A MIG which reported on the business implications of Covid-19 to the Prime Minister. EBRMIG had two functions: 1) to ensure rapid communication and engagement with business; and 2) to monitor and respond to the implications of key sectors and businesses.

ERCO – Emergency Response – Capabilities and Operations

A G6 led sub-team within ER2 that coordinates the immediate response function. ERCO develops and works with risk owning teams across BEIS to maintain operational effectiveness and the departmental capabilities to respond to an emergency.

EOC - Emergency Operations Centre

A centre which allows an ERG to gather in a dedicated, secure space to coordinate a response to a crisis. BEIS aimed to ensure that it had robust structures and processes in place to respond to an emergency, and staff were appropriately trained.

ERT - Emergency Response Team

The generic term for a team, or structure put in place to deal with an emergency. It follows the gold, silver, bronze command structures.

Team structures, can change depending on the emergency, will adjust according to issues faced and as part of the transition from response to recovery.

ER2 - Energy Resilience and Emergency Response

ER2 was formed from the expansion of the Energy Resilience team in 2017. It is responsible for working with teams across BEIS to ensure they are well prepared for an emergency.

ExCo – Executive Committee

The senior executive leadership of the Cabinet Office which monitors departmental delivery and performance, communicates decisions taken by the Permanent Secretary and takes collective decisions on corporate issues affecting the Department.

GPSMIG – General Public Sector Ministerial Implementation Group

A MIG which was chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to look at preparedness across the public and Critical National Infrastructure, excluding the NHS.

Green Home Grants

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The Green Homes Grant was a government grant for homeowners in England to help pay for certain energy-efficient home improvements. The scheme launched in September 2020 and closed to new applications at 5pm on 31 March 2021.

Grants can pay at least two thirds of the cost of some energy-saving renovations. The maximum amount available was £5,000, or £10,000 if in receipt of certain benefits.

Applications made before the scheme closed are still being processed.

HMT – HM Treasury

HMT is a ministerial department and is the Government's economic and finance ministry, maintaining control over public spending, setting the direction of the UK's economic policy and working to achieve strong and sustainable economic growth.

HSCMIG – Health and Social Care Ministerial Implementation Group

A MIG which was chaired by the Health Secretary to focus on the preparedness of the NHS and the medical and social package of support.

HSE – Health and Safety Executive

The HSE is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions. The HSE is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety and seeks to prevent work-related death, injury and ill health.

IMIG – International Ministerial Implementation Group

A MIG which was chaired by the Foreign Secretary. IMIG considered the international response to the pandemic.

Future Fund

The Future Fund was designed, alongside other government support schemes, to support companies facing financing difficulties due to the Coronavirus outbreak. The Future Fund is a government scheme to support UK-based companies ranging from £125,000 to £5 million, subject to at least equal match funding from private investors.

Innovate UK's Covid-19 Funding Response Programme

The Innovate UK business support scheme sought to protect existing innovation capability and provide support for business which other government support schemes had limited applicability – either because early-stage companies are not eligible (e.g. Coronavirus Business Interruption Loans) or because furloughing via the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme could undermine business continuity and performance

LGD – Lead Government Departments

A department which can be made responsible for the overall management of the central government response to an emergency.

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Most emergencies in the UK are handled at a local level by the emergency services and by the appropriate local authority or authorities, with no direct involvement by central government. LGD's are typically used where the scale or complexity of an emergency is such that some degree of central government coordination or support becomes necessary.

Local Authority Grants

The Covid-19 Business Grant schemes were a significant element of a business support offer, allocating almost £27 billion of funding to local authorities in England, to support businesses in their communities through a variety of schemes.

MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Now called the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

MIG – Ministerial Implementation Groups

Committees focusing on health, public sector preparedness, economy and international response which were set up at the start of the pandemic. These Committees fed into the Prime Minister's daily Covid-19 meetings.

Groups which facilitated daily contact with devolved ministers.

MoG – Machinery of Government Change

A Machinery of Government (MoG) change is a transfer of functions between ministers, either between ministers in charge of departments or other Cabinet Ministers, or between a minister and a non-departmental public body

It can affect functions carried out by the minister's department or a public body such as an executive agency under the minister's control, or by other public bodies. Usually the transfer of a function takes effect immediately.

NHS – National Health Service

The publicly funded healthcare systems of the UK.

NPI - Non-pharmaceutical interventions

Actions, apart from getting vaccinated and taking medicine, that people and communities can take to help slow the spread of illnesses. NPIs are also known as community mitigation strategies, and can include actions such as social distancing and wearing face masks.

OGDs – Other government departments

OLS – Office for Life Sciences

OLS is a part of DHSC and BEIS. It uses research, innovation and technology to transform health and care service.

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OPSS – Office for Product Safety and Standards

OPSS was created in January 2018 by BEIS to enhance protections for consumers' and the environment and to drive increased productivity, growth and business confidence.

PBS – BEIS' Professional and Business Services Team

The PBS team's job is to help professional and business services succeed in the UK. To achieve this, the PBS team work with industry and across government to make the UK a great place for professional and business services to do business.

PPE – Personal Protective Equipment

Equipment that protects the user against health and safety risks. It can include items such as safety helmets, hard hats, gloves, face masks, eye protection and high-visibility clothing.

PHE – Public Health England

A former executive agency of DHSC which operated to protect and improve health and wellbeing. This was disbanded in March 2021 and replaced by UK Health Security Agency and Office for Health Improvements and Disparities.

PMO – Project Management Office

PSED – Public Sector Equality Duty

A duty on public authorities to consider how their policies or decisions affect individuals who are protected under the Equality Act 2010. Considerations must be given to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Public Sector Decarbonisation

The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme was announced as part of the Chancellor's 'Plan for Jobs 2020' and launched in September 2020. The scheme aimed to support the UK's economic recovery from Covid-19, supporting up to 30,000 jobs in the low carbon and energy efficiency sectors. The scheme also contributed towards wider net zero goals by reducing emissions from the public sector. Phase 1 of the scheme provided £1 billion in grants during the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22 for public sector bodies to fund heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures.

Restart Grant

The Restart Grant scheme supported businesses in the non-essential retail, hospitality, leisure, personal care and accommodation sectors with a one-off grant, to reopen safely as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

Recovery Loan Scheme

The Recovery Loan Scheme launched in April 2021 and ensured UK businesses of any size could continue to access loans and other kinds of finance up to £10 million per business as they grew and recovered from the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic.

SitRep - Situation Report

A SitRep provides detailed information on an incident including the current situation, background information, details of media activity and assessment of future events and changes of the situation. It is updated in line with COBR meetings to ensure accuracy.

SME – Small and Medium-sized enterprises

An organisation that has fewer than 250 employees and a turnover of less than €50 million or a balance sheet total less than €43 million.

SMGs – Small Ministerial Groups

SMGs were set up and met on an ad hoc basis as required.

Social Housing Decarbonisation

Registered providers of social housing (including private and local authority providers) could apply to Wave 1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) to support the installation of energy performance measures in social homes in England. Up to £160 million was available. Applications to the fund closed in October 2021.

SRO - Senior Responsible Owner

The SRO is ultimately accountable for a programme or project meeting its objectives, delivering the projected outcomes and realising the required benefits. They are the owner of the business case and accountable for all aspects of governance. In addition to this, they are also accountable to Parliament for the implementation of the Government's policies assigned to them.

Trade Credit Insurance

The Trade Credit Reinsurance Scheme ensured that trade credit insurance coverage and credit limits were maintained during the coronavirus pandemic, helping businesses to trade with confidence.

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TUC – Trades Trade Unions Congress

An umbrella organisation of Britain's Trade Unions which seeks to support Trade Unions to grow and thrive and to represent their members.

UKHSA – UK Health Security Agency

An executive agency sponsored by DHSC. UKSHA is responsible for protecting individuals from the impact of infectious diseases, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents and other health threats.

UKRI – UK Research and Innovation

A non-departmental public body sponsored by BEIS. UKRI supports research and knowledge exchange at higher education individuals in England and Innovate UK, the UK's innovation agency.

UKRI's objective in relation to Covid-19 was to fund research relevant to the stated, emerging and potential needs of government and other actors (e.g. public services, private enterprise) dealing with all aspects of Covid-19 and its wider implications, and to produce impact or useable/actionable knowledge within the lifetime of short-to-medium term awards.

UKRI Research Stabilisation

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, UKRI worked with the research and innovation community to understand the impacts across the system and to target support accordingly.

At the start of the first lockdown UKRI allocated up to £43 million to support extensions for PhD students whose funding period was due to end before 31 March 2021.

The SURE fund was intended to bolster those Higher Education Providers (HEPs) who were taking their own steps to deliver efficiencies, in line with the rest of the economy, to protect their research capacity and capability through the coronavirus pandemic. To achieve this, the government, through this fund, covered up to 80% of a HEP's income losses from international (non-EU) students for the academic year 2020-21, up to the value of non-publicly funded research (including activity which the HEP funds itself) undertaken at that HEP. This fund enabled research and innovation activity to continue where it was disproportionately impacted by the loss of key income streams and preserved the capacity and capability of research departments, including the retention of researchers.

VTF - Vaccine Task Force

A taskforce set up in 2020 to meet the challenge posed by Covid-19 with the objective of securing effective vaccines for the UK as quickly as possible.

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The VTF was successful in securing the earliest access to the Oxford/Astra Zeneca and Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines.

The VTF also played a critical role in supporting efforts to distribute vaccines globally.

41. Annex L: List of BEIS Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Assessments

PSED Analysis	Date
Covid-19 Debt Schemes:	18 June 2020
- Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs)	
- Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILs)	
- Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILs)	
Future Fund	18 June 2020
Retail, Hospitality, Leisure Grant Fund, Small Business Grant Fund, Local Authority Discretionary Fund, Local Restrictions Support Grants, the Additional Restrictions Grant, the Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs, the Restart Grant and the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant schemes	23 December 2021
Safer Workplaces Guidance	10 May 2020, Updated 2021
SURE fund	August 2020
Trade Credit Insurance Scheme	Undated
Vaccine Task Force	Undated

42. Annex M: Coordination of policy development and delivery organogram as at April 2020

Updated: 16/04/2020

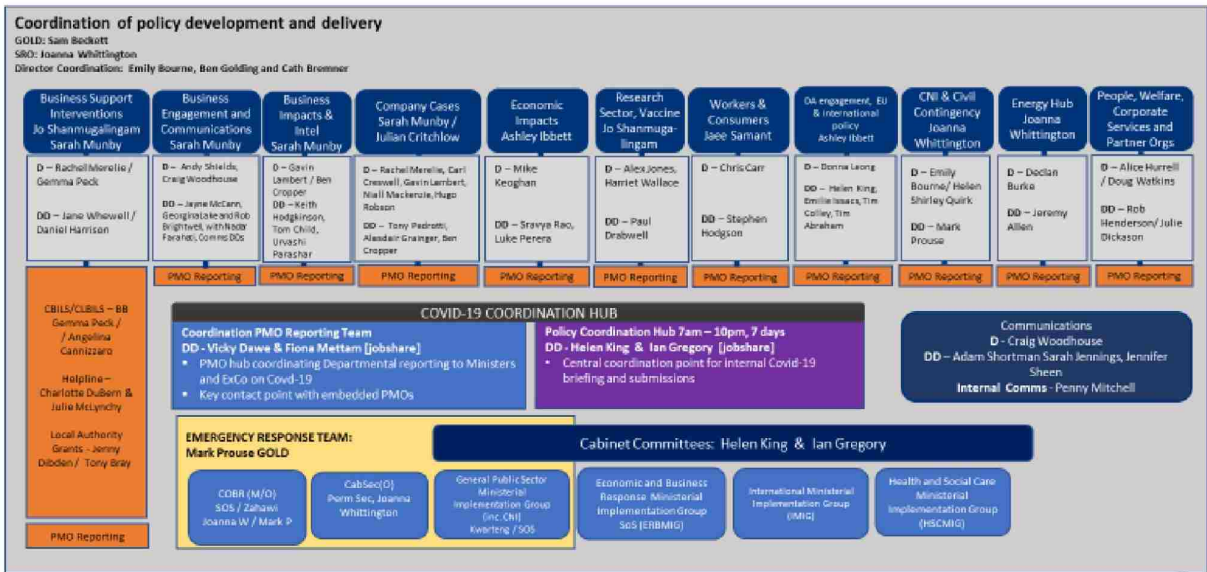
Ministerial Private Offices

BEIS EXCO

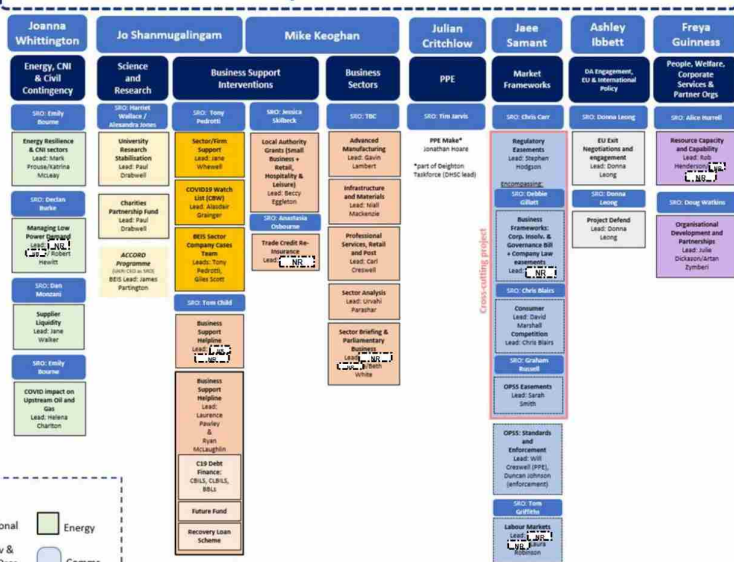
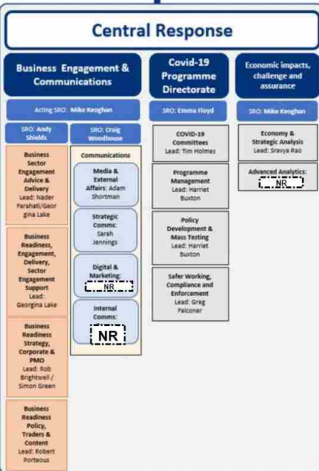
BEIS EXCO Governance – Ian Gregory

- Coordinates Exco agendas
Disseminates papers & record actions

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BEIS EXCO Portfolio



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43.

Annex N - Covid-19 response organogram (taken from the Economic Recovery Dashboard dated 9 June 2021)

44.

45. **Annex O - Table of Exhibits – BEIS Module 2 R9 (1) Corporate Statement**

Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
1.	3.11	ExCo Attendance Tracker 2019 - 2022	May 2019 - October 2022		INQ000065321
1a.	3.13	BEIS ExCo paper regarding central emergency response	11/07/2017		INQ000148242

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
2.	4.3, 5.22	BEIS C-19 Response Structures: Organogram			INQ000064785
2a.	4.11 (c), (d)	Decision timeline			INQ000065120
3.	4.12	Briefing note re: non-essential retail taskforce	21/05/2020		INQ000064843
4.	7.4(a)	Secretary of State Briefing for COBR(M)	26/02/2020		INQ000064988
5.	7.4(c)	Extracts from Private Office email records from March 2020.	March 2020		INQ000065294
5a.	7.4 (c)	Economic and Business Committee briefing	16/03/2020		INQ000065300
5b.	7.4 (c)	Email relating to non-ventilator offers of help	18/03/2020		INQ000065298
5c.	7.4 (c)	Email relating to BEIS SoS, Chancellor and Prime Minister meeting	17/03/2020		INQ000065299
5d.	7.4 (c)	Email chain regarding commission prior to first lockdown	23/03/2020		INQ000065301
5e.	7.4 (c)	Bundle of emails from early March 2020	March 2020		INQ000065290
5f.	7.4 (c)	Email regarding commission on social distancing measures	23/03/2020		INQ000065296
6.	8.4	Briefing regarding CNI sectors and pandemic influenza plans	27/02/2020		INQ000065987

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
7.	8.7	Email from Alex Chisholm to Carl Creswell and others re: BEIS Hospitality Team Agreement	18/03/2020		INQ000064742
8.	9.3	Summary of NPI impact			INQ000065196
9.	9.5	WBD Living with Covid Advice	03/03/2022		INQ000065231
10.	9.5	British Retail Consortium on WBD advice	03/03/2022		INQ000065230
11.	9.5	Retail reopening December 2020			INQ000064995
12.	9.5	Shopkind briefing			INQ000065064
13.	10.9	BEIS Directors consideration of deployment of industry resources	04/11/2020		INQ000064973
14.	10.10	Covid-O Paper	09/12/2020		INQ000066029
15.	10.10	Covid-O Brief	09/12/2020		INQ000065009
16.	10.10	Covid-O Actions	09/12/2020		INQ000065407
17.	n/a	n/a [error in sequence]	n/a	n/a	n/a
18.	10.11	Submission to SoS to provide further support to DHSC			INQ000065015
19.	10.12	Covid-O Paper			INQ000065027

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
20.	10.12	Covid-O Brief			INQ000065039
21.	10.12	Transport Sec	08/01/2021		INQ000065426
22.	10.16	Cost/Benefit Analysis of Workplace Mass Testing			INQ000065288
23.	10.18	COVID-O briefing	25/01/2021		INQ000065058
24.	10.23	Secretary of State Submission on mass testing	16/02/2021		INQ000065234
25.	10.29 10.91	Notes and slides from meetings with trade unions	04/03/2021		INQ000065072
25a.	10.29	Notes and slides from meetings with trade unions	04/03/21		INQ000065075
25b.	10.29	Notes and slides from meetings with trade unions	04/03/21		INQ000065076
26.	10.31	Sticker scheme for testing presentation	02/03/2021		INQ000065069
27.	10.36	Memorandum re: Vaccines Taskforce (VTF)	01/08/2021		INQ000065289
28.	10.42	Report re: Investigation into preparations for potential COVID-19 vaccines	16/12/2020		INQ000065014
29.	10.43	National Audit Report on Vaccine Task Force (VTF)	Feb 2022		INQ000065228
30.	10.50	Correspondence between No 10 and BEIS			INQ000065034
30(a)	10.54	EBRIG - Operationalising an economic "restart" under extended NPIs			INQ000064807

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
31.	n/a		21/05/2020		INQ000064843
32.	10.64	Consultation Summary re: working safely during Covid-19 in restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services guidance	30/05/2020		INQ000065304
33.	n/a	n/a [error in sequence]	n/a	n/a	n/a
34.	10.69 Annex H	SoS speech on approach to reopening the economy	09/06/2020		INQ000065346
35.	10.75	Comments on Working Safely guidance for meetings with PHE and HSE.			INQ000065263
35a.	10.75	Comments on Working Safely guidance for meetings with PHE and HSE.			INQ000066031
36.	10.78 Annex H	Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus.	22/09/2020		INQ000065358
37.	N/A - error in sequence				
38.	10.81	Submission on tiering	08/10/2020		INQ000064943
39.	10.82	SoS update on national lockdown	31/10/2020		INQ000064967
40.	10.82 Annex H	Prime Minister's Statement of 23 November 2020	23/11/2020		INQ000065360

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
41.	10.84	Paper to Cabinet Office on Roadmap to Recovery	09/02/2021		INQ000065318
42.	10.85 13.3	Boosting compliance with key behaviours	17/03/2021		INQ000065239
43.	10.85	COVID-O paper			INQ000065109
44.	10.85	COVID-O briefing			INQ000065128
45.	10.86	Feedback from businesses and TUs			INQ000065362
46.	10.87	Cabinet meeting brief on Covid-19 response	22/03/2021		INQ000065086
47.	N/A - error in sequence				
48.	10.95	Minutes of meeting with TUC and BROs	15/09/2021		INQ000065167
49.	10.99 Annex H	BEIS engagement with stakeholders on Covid-19 risk in the workplace			INQ000065241
50.	10.103	Covid-O Meeting Notes dated 29 March 2022	29/03/2022		INQ000065354
51.	10.106	Email chain from [NR] [NR] to Julie James, [NR] [NR] and others re: Ventilation WG Agenda and CO2 monitors financial schemes	29/06/2021		INQ000065133
52.	10.109	Improving ventilation in high-risk business settings autumn/winter 2021	03/09/2021		INQ000065159

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
52a.	10.110	Submission to Covid-O regarding improving ventilation	09/09/2021		INQ000065170
53.	10.112	CO request for BEIS to provide updated engagement plan for its sectors.	11/01/2022		INQ000065213
54.	10.115	BEIS draft regulation and guidance on certification to be shared with stakeholders	30/09/2021		INQ000065173
55.	10.116	DHSC guidance on certification	27/09/2021		INQ000065361
56.	10.130	PPE Make Lessons Learned	12/08/2020		INQ000066032
57.	10.137	BEIS paper on engaging with BAME led businesses to help with vaccine uptake	25/02/2021		INQ000065079
58.	10.141	Covid-O Meeting Notes dated 17 March 2021 re: Vaccine Mandation	17/03/2021		INQ000065082
59.	11.2	Implications for Home Working for Sectors	24/03/2020		INQ000065317
60.	11.2	Email from Gavin Lambert to Carl Creswell AND Urvashi Parashar re: Covid-19 Sector Intel Update	18/03/2020		INQ000064739
61.	11.3	COVID-19 Disproportionate Impacts Paper	14/10/2020		INQ000065319
62.	11.5	Collated proposals on disproportionate impacts	20/10/2021		INQ000064961

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
63.	12.3	Email from Alex Chisholm to Mark Sedwill	25/03/2020		INQ000066033
64.	12.4	Covid-19 Business Impact Assessment paper for COBR	08/03/2020		INQ000066034
65.	12.6	Covid-19 Business Intel Pack for Contributors	08/10/2020		INQ000066035
66.	12.7	Email from Haris Irshad to NR	11/01/2021		INQ000066038
66a.	12.7	Covid-19 Workforce Estimates	11/01/2021		INQ000066039
66b.	12.7	Covid-19 Workforce Estimates summaries	11/01/2021		INQ000066040
66c.	12.7	Covering email regarding Covid-19 Workforce Estimates	11/01/2021		INQ000066041
67.	12.8	Email to 'Submissions Distribution List' from Andrew Piper	20/07/2021		INQ000066045
68.	12.8	Slide for May 21 Update			INQ000066048
69.	12.8	Taken from attachment to the email of 20 July 2021 – submission of that date	20/07/2021		INQ000066049
70.	12.8	Information on the Events Research Programme	26/11/2021		INQ000066050
71.	12.12	BEIS presentation on business support for closed sectors proposals	08/02/2021		INQ000066051

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
72.	12.13	Covid Impact Analysis	02/04/2020		INQ000066052
73.	12.14	PowerPoint re: Economic Impact of Covid-19 BEIS	01/06/2020		INQ000065273
74.	N/A - error in sequence				
75.	15.11	Briefing for Minister Zahawi's quadrilateral call dated 18/03/2020	18/03/2020		INQ000065267
76.	15.11	Email chain			INQ000065266
77.	15.11	Email correspondence			INQ000065268
78.	15.11	Letter from Ken Slates to Alok Sharma	11/03/2020		INQ000065269
79.	15.11	Team timeline			INQ000065270
80.	15.12	PowerPoint re: BEIS critical timeline – [Devolution & the Union Team (D&U)]	17/03/2020		INQ000065286
81.	16.14	BEIS Critical friend review, reporting to Covid-19 programme board	16/07/2020		INQ000065020
82.	16.15	A subsequent report was presented to the Covid-19 programme board	October 2020		INQ000065025
83.	16.33	PowerPoint re: COVID-19 Evaluation Steering Group Meeting 3	12/01/2022		INQ000096923
84.	16.34	PowerPoint re: BEIS COVID-19 Response	12/01/2022		INQ000096934

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
85.	Annex H	BEIS publishes guidance on 'Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)'.	11/05/2020		INQ000065408
86.	Annex H	BEIS publishes guidance on 'Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)'.	11/05/2020	National Archives	
87.	Annex H	Step 1 of the strategy to lift restrictions begins.	13/05/2020		INQ000065339
88.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect industry feedback and cover non-essential retail businesses ahead of planned opening at Step 2 of the reopening roadmap.	25/05/2020		INQ000065344
89.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect industry feedback and cover non-essential retail businesses ahead of planned opening at Step 2 of the reopening roadmap.	25/05/2020	National Archives	
90.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to include details on test and trace.	29/05/2020	National Archives	
91.	Annex H	Step 2a comes into force – outdoor retail and car showrooms reopened and up to 6 people permitted to meet outdoors.	01/06/2020		INQ000065357
92.	Annex H	Step 2a comes into force – outdoor retail and car showrooms reopened and up to 6 people permitted to meet outdoors.	01/06/2020		INQ000065420

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
93.	N/A - error in sequence				
94.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect industry feedback, guidance on test and trace service, guidance on safer travel and to provide guidance on managing security risks.	15/06/2020	National Archives	
95.	Annex H	Step 2b comes into force – remaining non-essential retail permitted to reopen subject to meeting Covid-secure guidelines.	15/06/2020		INQ000065409
96.	N/A - error in sequence				
97.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to add new guidance for close contact services and the hospitality sector ahead of planned reopening at Step 3.	23/06/2020		INQ000065410
98.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to add new guidance for close contact services and the hospitality sector ahead of planned reopening at Step 3.	23/06/2020	National Archives	
99.	Annex H	Move from 2m rule to 1m+ and confirmation of move to Step 3 on 4 July 2020.	23/06/2020		INQ000065411

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
100.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect the change to the 2m rule and add guidance on support bubbles.	24/06/2020	National Archives	
101.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to add guidance on local lockdowns, discouraging shouting, keeping records of staff/visitors, and what to do in the event of a Covid outbreak in the workplace.	03/07/2020	National Archives	
102.	N/A - error in sequence				
103.	Annex H	Step 3 comes into force – some personal care (hair salons and barbers) and hospitality (food service providers, pubs, accommodation) businesses permitted to reopen.	04/07/2020		INQ000065421
104.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to permit all close contact businesses to reopen from 13 July 2020 with some restrictions and add guidance on entertainment permitted in hospitality venues.	07/07/2020	National Archives	
105.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to include guidance on mass gatherings in the workplace.	10/07/2020	National Archives	

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
106.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect changes to the rules on working from home and when to wear face coverings. Guidance on mass gatherings, ventilation, disposing of face coverings, PPE and work-related travel also amended.	23/07/2020	National Archives	
107.	Annex H	PM announces a two-week delay to the lifting of restrictions.	31/07/2020		INQ000065413
108.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated on protecting people who are at higher risk - from 1 August 2020, clinically extremely vulnerable individuals can go to the workplace as long as it is COVID-secure but should carry on working from home wherever possible.	31/07/2020	National Archives	
109.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated on consulting the workforce before returning to work, protecting people who are at higher risk and where to wear face coverings.	12/08/2020	National Archives	
110.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect that all close contact services, including those in the highest risk zone, can restart from 15 August 2020. Practitioners must now wear a visor and mask. Customers must now wear face coverings.	13/08/2020	National Archives	

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
111.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to add section on priority actions to take to protect staff and clients.	09/09/2020	National Archives	
112.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated on social gatherings of more than 6 people and mandatory test and trace requirements.	10/09/2020	National Archives	
113.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to add priority actions to take to protect staff and customers.	11/09/2020	National Archives	
114.	N/A - error in sequence				
115.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated on working from home, supporting staff to self-isolate, and (for close contact services) mandatory PPE for staff.	24/09/2020	National Archives	
116.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated on regulation changes, customers and staff wearing face coverings, customers dancing and singing (for hospitality).	01/10/2020	National Archives	

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
117.	10.80 Annex H	Three tiered local Covid alert levels come into force.	14/10/2020		INQ000065423
118.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to reflect the launch of Local Covid Alert Levels.	15/10/2020	National Archives	
119.	Annex H	PM announces national lockdown from 5 November 2020	31/10/2020		INQ000065414
120.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated in advance of National restrictions from 5 November 2020.	04/11/2020	National Archives	
121.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to further reflect national restrictions – hospitality venues like restaurants, bars and pubs must close but can still provide takeaway and delivery services. Anyone who can work from home, should and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals should not attend work if they can't work from home for this period of restrictions. Guidance left intact but noted at the front that not all applied as national restrictions applied.	09/11/2020	National Archives	
122.	N/A - error in sequence				

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
123.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to add new local restriction tiers and the COVID-19 Winter Plan	26/11/2020	National Archives	
124.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated on self-isolation guidance for contacts of individuals who test positive. Self-isolation period now 10 days instead of 14.	13/12/2020	National Archives	
125.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated with reference to local restriction tiers and protecting people who are at higher risk.	21/12/2020	National Archives	
126.	Annex H	PM announces national lockdown from 5 January 2021	04/01/2021		INQ000065415
127.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to reference National restrictions from 6 January 2021.	06/01/2021	National Archives	
128.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to add guidance on tests and vaccinations.	10/01/2021	National Archives	
129.	Annex H	Roadmap out of lockdown published	22/02/2021		INQ000065416
130.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to add information on ventilation, tests and the roadmap setting out how Covid-19 restrictions will be eased.	30/03/2021	National Archives	

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
131.	Annex H	Step 2 of the roadmap comes into force. Safer Working guidance updated to reflect Step 2 of the roadmap – non-essential retail, outdoor hospitality and close contact services can reopen.	12/04/2021	National Archives	
132.	Annex H	Safer Working guidance updated to add guidance for Step 3 of the roadmap, giving businesses two weeks' notice.	04/05/2021	National Archives	
133.	Annex H	Step 3 of the Roadmap comes into force. Safer Working guidance updated to reflect the move to Step 3.	17/05/2021	National Archives	
134.	Annex H	The team mocked up draft Step 4 guidance and shared it with a smaller number of Chief Executives for their feedback.	09/06/2021		INQ000065243
135.	Annex H	PM announces a 4-week pause at Step 3 until 19 July 2021	14/06/2021		INQ000065417
136.	Annex H	Prime Minister set out a five-point plan for living with Covid from 19 July 2021, if Step 4 takes place (final decision to be announced on 12 July 2021).	05/07/2021		INQ000065418
137.	Annex H	Chaired by Covid-19 Director– to discuss updates on key workstreams and	08/07/2021		INQ000065144

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
		comments from attendees on the 19 July 2021 plan.			
138.	Annex H	Chaired by Covid-19 Director– to discuss updates on key workstreams and comments from attendees on the 19 July 2021 plan.	08/07/2021		INQ000065149
139.	Annex H	Working Safely guidance published for Step 4	14/07/2021	National Archives	
140.	Annex H	Working Safely guidance updated to reflect that people who are fully vaccinated no longer need to self-isolate if they have had close contact with someone who has Covid-19.	16/08/2021	National Archives	
141.	Annex H	Autumn and Winter Plan published.	14/09/2021		INQ000065168
142.	Annex H	Email sent to stakeholders seeking feedback on the Working Safely guidance following the publication of the COVID-19 Autumn-Winter Plan.	21/09/2021		INQ000065166
143.	Annex H	Email sent to stakeholders seeking feedback on the Working Safely guidance following the publication of the COVID-19 Autumn-Winter Plan.	21/09/2021		INQ000065183
144.	Annex H	Email sent to stakeholders seeking feedback on the Working Safely guidance following the publication of	21/09/2021		INQ000065172

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
		the COVID-19 Autumn-Winter Plan.			
145.	Annex H	Email sent to stakeholders seeking feedback on the Working Safely guidance following the publication of the COVID-19 Autumn-Winter Plan.	21/09/2021		INQ000065169
146.	Annex H	Email sent to stakeholders seeking feedback on the Working Safely guidance following the publication of the COVID-19 Autumn-Winter Plan.	21/09/2021		INQ000065425
147.	Annex H	Covid-19 Director provided an update on the development of the Autumn/Winter plan and revision of the Working Safely guidance.	15/10/2021		INQ000065174
148.	Annex H	Covid-19 Director provided an update on the development of the Autumn/Winter plan and revision of the Working Safely guidance.	15/10/2021		INQ000065177
149.	Annex H	Guidance updated in response to September 2021 feedback from stakeholders.	09/11/2021	National Archives	
150.	Annex H	Covid-19 Director gave updates on Plan A (steering the country through Autumn/Winter with a focus on pharmaceutical interventions) and guidance changes as well as progress on 'Plan B' (measures to	12/11/2021		INQ000065186

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
		control transmission while minimising social/economic impacts if the NHS looks likely to come under unsustainable pressure) preparations, including setting out details of the policy.			
151.	Annex H	Covid-19 Director gave updates on Plan A (steering the country through Autumn/Winter with a focus on pharmaceutical interventions) and guidance changes as well as progress on 'Plan B' (measures to control transmission while minimising social/economic impacts if the NHS looks likely to come under unsustainable pressure) preparations, including setting out details of the policy.	12/11/2021		INQ000065187
152.	Annex H	Covid-19 Director updated attendees on the impending move to Plan B due to the Omicron variant and publication of new guidance.	01/12/2021		INQ000065192
153.	Annex H	Prime Minister confirms move to Plan B due to the Omicron variant. Working Safely guidance updated to reflect move to Plan B	08/12/2021		INQ000065419
154.	Annex H	Prime Minister confirms move to Plan B due to the Omicron variant.	08/12/2021	National Archives	

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
		Working Safely guidance updated to reflect move to Plan B			
155.	Annex H	Working Safely guidance updated to reflect working from home from 13 December 2021.	12/12/2021	National Archives	
156.	Annex H	Working Safely guidance updated to reflect that people who test positive on a lateral flow test don't need a confirmatory PCR test.	11/01/2022	National Archives	
157.	Annex H	Working Safely guidance updated to reflect the fact that workers don't need to work from home and can return to the workplace.	21/01/2022	National Archives	
158.	Annex H	Working Safely guidance updated to remove all legal measures on self-isolation.	24/02/2022	National Archives	
159.	Annex H	Email sent to stakeholders requesting views from employers and businesses on the future approach to managing COVID-19 risk in the workplace.	07/03/2022		INQ000065232
160.	Annex H	Email sent to stakeholders requesting views from employers and businesses on the future approach to managing COVID-19 risk in the workplace.	07/03/2022		INQ000065235
161.	N/A - error in sequence				

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
N/A - error in sequence					
162.	Annex H	Led by Covid-19 Director to check in with the group following the publication of the Principles for Employers and update the group on the changes to guidance, as well as the changes to COVID response within Government.	01/04/2022		INQ000065240
163.	Footnote 5, page 12	Central Government's Responding to Emergencies arrangement	19/04/2013		INQ000096875
164.	Footnote 11, page 36 Footnote 39, page 95	Prime Minister's statement on living with Covid-19	21/02/2022		INQ000146514
165.	Footnote 12, page 37	We offer testing to our staff – Endorsement Scheme	10/05/2021		INQ000146515
166.	Footnote 13, page 38	Press Release regarding Government launch of Vaccine Taskforce to combat coronavirus	17/04/2020		INQ000146516
167.	Footnote 14, page 38	Written Ministerial Statement on a Machinery of Government Change – Vaccine Taskforce	22/07/2021		INQ000146517
168.	Footnote 15, page 42	Business Secretary statement on Covid-19	12/05/2020		INQ000146518

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
169.	Footnote 16, page 43	Guidance for restaurant staff on working safely during Covid-19	11/05/2020	National Archives	INQ000146546
170.	Footnote 17, page 43, 10.68	Guidance for employers to help get their businesses running and operating safely	11/05/2020	National Archives	INQ000146544
171.	Footnote 18, page 45 Footnote 19, page 47	Guidance to help get Britons safely back to work	11/05/2020		INQ000146519
172.	Footnote 20, page 47	Prime Minister's statement on Coronavirus	28/05/2020		INQ000146520
173.	Footnote 21, page 47	Prime Minister's statement on Coronavirus	10/06/2020		INQ000146521
174.	Footnote 22, page 47	The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 2020			INQ000146522
175.	Footnote 23, page 47	Business Secretary statement on Coronavirus	09/06/2020		INQ000146523
176.	Footnote 24, page 49 Footnote 25, page 50	Guidance on working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)	24/09/2020	National Archives	INQ000146524
177.	Footnote 26, page 54	Public health principles for reducing the spread of respiratory infections, including COVID-19, in the workplace	01/04/2022	National Archives	INQ000146525

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
178.	Footnote 27, page 55	ONS note on GDP output approach			INQ000146541
179.	Footnote 28, page 58	Press release on Olympics chief brought in to boost PPE production	19/04/2020		INQ000146540
180.	Footnote 29, page 59	Secretary of State PPE update	01/05/2020		INQ000146512
181.	Footnote 30, page 59	PPE Paper for Departmental Board	30/04/2020		INQ000146513
182.	Footnote 31, page 59	Ministerial Update on BEIS Covid-19 response structures	08/04/2020		INQ000064792
183.	Footnote 32, page 59	Guidance for Businesses on New High-Volume Manufacturers of COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	September 2020		INQ000146526
184.	Footnote 32, page 59	Guidance for Businesses, Organisations and Individuals on New Small-Scale Manufacturers of COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	September 2020		INQ000146527
185.	Footnote 33, page 59	Guidance by the OPSS for manufacturers and makers of face visors to comply with the General Product Safety Regulations 2005	January 2022		INQ000146542
186.	Footnote 34, page 61	<i>There's still a way to go to tackle vaccine hesitancy, says Kwasi Kwarteng, Evening Standard</i>	30/03/2021		INQ000146528

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Exhibit number (SM/[x])	Paragraph of the statement	Description	Date	Document URL	Relativity reference
187.	Footnote 35, page 64	ACAS press release on new advice hub to help disabled people understand their rights at work	28/07/2021		INQ000146529
188.	Footnote 37, page 75	Oral Evidence session on Bounce Back Loans Scheme (BBLs)	10/01/2022		INQ000146530
189.	Annex I	Process review of UKRI's research and innovation response to COVID-19	18/01/2022		INQ000146531
190.	Annex I	Evaluation of the Bounce Back Loan Scheme, Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, and Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme	June 2022		INQ000146545
191.	Annex I	Future Find early assessment report			INQ000146532
192.	Annex I	Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 evaluation reports	March 2022		INQ000146533

46.
47.