Pensions charge cap changes outlined

The Department for Work and Pensions has outlined proposals to enable automatic enrolment pension schemes to make greater use of performance-based fees, which are payable to an investment manager only if they generate high returns on their investments.

Currently these fees are included within the pension scheme charge cap, meaning they are rarely considered viable.

If implemented, these performance fees would be excluded from the charge cap, helping schemes – if they choose to utilise it – overcome barriers to long-term investment and provide new opportunities to invest in areas such as British businesses and green projects.

The intention is to make it easier for schemes to access new channels of investment – such as funding for new British start-ups and the infrastructure needed for the transition to net zero – known as “illiquid investments”. This move can offer greater returns to savers whilst continuing to ensure they remain protected from being charged high fees despite low returns.

Minister for Pensions, Guy Opperman, said:

> As automatic enrolment has developed, we have always wanted to ensure the best outcomes for members. This consultation will look at ways to enable schemes to take advantage of long-term, illiquid investment opportunities and provide better returns for members.
>
> Lifting these barriers can also help contribute to the key role finance has in tackling climate change, by mobilising private finance towards clean and resilient growth and addressing market barriers to longer-term investing in green projects.

The ‘Enabling Investment in Productive Finance’ consultation, announced at the Budget, builds upon the principles laid out in previous consultations on improving member outcomes and addressing barriers to long-term illiquid investment.

Responses from these previous consultations have highlighted industry support for the objective of providing trustees with greater flexibility when it comes to performance fees and the charge cap.

The latest consultation will investigate ways the government can facilitate that, while ensuring that the current protections in place to shield members from high and unfair charges are not diluted.

Further information

- The consultation period begins on 30 November 2021 and the final date for submission of responses will be midnight on 18 January 2022.
- Read the Enabling Investment in Productive Finance consultation on GOV.UK.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

Follow DWP on:

New support for UK's world-leading agri-food and drink industry

- Support comes ahead of Small Business Saturday, a scheme to encourage consumers to shop small in the run-up to Christmas
- Agri-food & drink specialists to be placed in key markets to promote Global Britain's world-leading produce
- Plan to boost UK's food and drink exports worth £21.7 billion in 2020, helping to level up communities across Britain through global trade

The Government has today announced further measures to support the UK's world-leading agri-food and drink sector, helping them to build back better from the pandemic and thrive in a Global Britain.

The Government will add eight new agri-food and drink attachés in priority markets, as part of a wider plan to boost exports, further unlock barriers to trade and open up new exporting opportunities around the world.

As well as posts in China, USA, India, Canada and Mexico, the agri-food attachés will be covering growth markets in the Gulf, Africa, South America and the Asia-Pacific region. There will also be additional capacity and resource in Europe, as Government's key market.

Existing attachés in China and the UAE have been pivotal in securing access for a greater range of products, driving export growth and building mutually supportive relationships with trading partners. Attachés are based in UK embassies and consulates overseas and have long-standing expertise in the agri-food and drink sector.

UK Government has a key role to play in supporting businesses grow their exports in global markets. The new attaché roles will help to reduce and remove trade barriers, broaden market access and support companies as they increase their market share in established and emerging international markets.

Secretary of State for International Trade, Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP said:

> From Scottish salmon and Welsh Lamb to Northern Irish beef and English sparkling wine, our food and drink is recognised at home and abroad for its great taste and high quality.

> Today’s announcement will showcase the very best that the UK has to offer on a global stage, boost jobs in our food and drink sector and help to level up every part of the UK.

“My department is supporting UK businesses on their export journey. From our Export Support Service to Export Champions, we want businesses all over the UK to have the tools to take advantage of the ambitious trade deals we are signing with countries across the world.”

Environment Secretary George Eustice said:

> We want people at home and abroad to be lining up to buy British.

> The support announced today will enable our farmers and food and drink producers to take advantage of new opportunities and fly the flag for UK produce around the world.

This follows the recent successful launch of DIT’s ‘Made in the UK, Sold to the World’ campaign, which saw a range of measures to support UK businesses in their exporting journey and deliver on the aim of exporting a trillion pounds’ worth of goods and services by 2030.

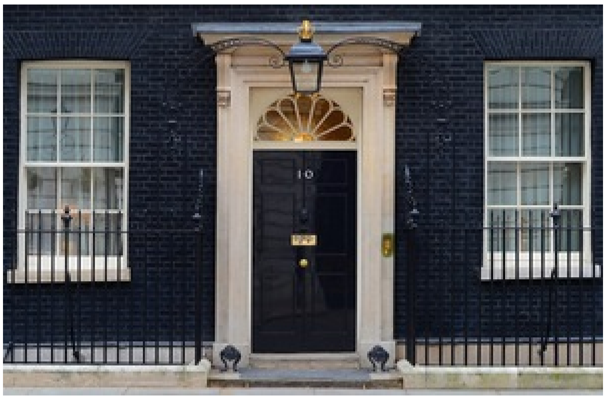
Today’s announcement also follows the International Trade Secretary’s keynote speech at the Margaret Thatcher Conference on Trade last week, where she set out the UK’s trade strategy that will seize the economic opportunities of a changing global economy, boosting jobs across the UK.

The UK’s food and drink industry exports totalled £21.7 billion in 2020, including £1.8 billion worth of exports to the USA and £257 million to the UAE.

Appointment of Suffragan Bishop of Barking: 30 November 2021

Press release

The Queen has approved the nomination of The Reverend Lynne Cullens to the Suffragan See of Barking.



The Queen has approved the nomination of The Reverend Lynne Cullens, Rector of Stockport and Brinnington, in the Diocese of Chester, to the Suffragan See of Barking, in the Diocese of Chelmsford, in succession to The Right Reverend Peter Hill, following his retirement on 4th August 2021.

Background

Lynne was educated at Manchester University and trained for ministry at the Southern North West Training Partnership. She served her title at St Peter's, St Stephen's, St John the Evangelist and Holy Trinity, Congleton, in the Diocese of Chester and was ordained Priest in 2013.

In 2015, Lynne became a non-stipendiary minister at St John the Evangelist, Sandbach Heath, and was appointed Priest in Charge at St Andrew with St John the Baptist Church, Crewe in 2016.

In 2019, Lynne took up her current role as Rector of Stockport and Brinnington, also in the Diocese of Chester.

Published 30 November 2021

CMA directs Facebook to sell Giphy

Press release

The CMA requires Facebook (which has recently renamed itself 'Meta') to sell Giphy, after finding that the deal could harm social media users and UK advertisers.

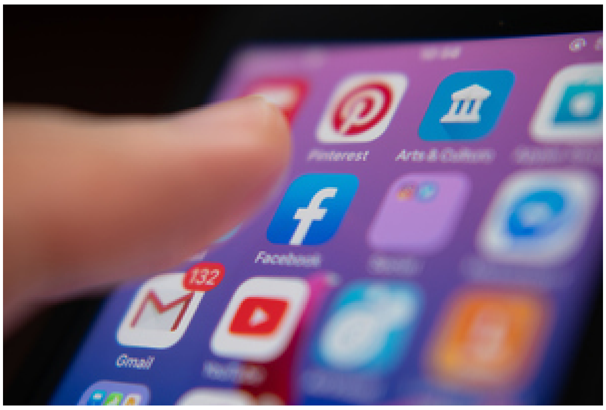


Image credit: CMA

In line with its Phase 2 provisional findings issued in August, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has today concluded that Facebook's acquisition of Giphy would reduce competition between social media platforms and that the deal has already removed Giphy as a potential challenger in the display advertising market.

The independent CMA panel reviewing the merger has concluded that Facebook would be able to increase its already significant market power in relation to other social media platforms by:

- denying or limiting other platforms' access to Giphy GIFs, driving more traffic to Facebook-owned sites – Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram – which already account for 73% of user time spent on social media in the UK, or
- changing the terms of access by, for example, requiring TikTok, Twitter and Snapchat to provide more user data in order to access Giphy GIFs.

As part of its in-depth investigation, the CMA also looked at how the deal would affect the display advertising market. It found that, before the merger, Giphy had launched innovative advertising services which it was considering expanding to countries outside the US, including the UK. Giphy's services allowed companies – such as Dunkin' Donuts and Pepsi – to promote their brands through visual images and GIFs.

The CMA found that Giphy's advertising services had the potential to compete with Facebook's own display advertising services. They would have also encouraged greater innovation from others in the market, including social media sites and advertisers. Facebook terminated Giphy's advertising services at the time of the merger, removing an important source of potential competition. The CMA considers this particularly concerning given that Facebook controls nearly half of the £7 billion display advertising market in the UK.

After consulting with interested businesses and organisations – and assessing alternative solutions (known as 'remedies') put forward by Facebook – the CMA has concluded that its competition concerns can only be addressed by Facebook selling Giphy in its entirety to an approved buyer.

Stuart McIntosh, Chair of the independent inquiry group carrying out the phase 2 investigation, said:

> The tie-up between Facebook and Giphy has already removed a potential challenger in the display advertising market.
>
> Without action, it will also allow Facebook to increase its significant market power in social media even further, through controlling competitors' access to Giphy GIFs.
>
> By requiring Facebook to sell Giphy, we are protecting millions of social media users and promoting competition and innovation in digital advertising.

1. Facebook, Inc. has recently renamed itself Meta Platforms Inc. For the purposes of this press release, we refer to the company as 'Facebook'.

2. The CMA recently fined Facebook £50.5 million for breaching an initial enforcement order imposed in relation to the Facebook/Giphy merger.

3. For more information, visit the Facebook/Giphy case page.

Published 30 November 2021

UK to work with Malaysia on taking forward the Glasgow Climate Pact

British High Commissioner to Malaysia, HE Charles Hay hosted the Together For Our Planet Dinner in Kuala Lumpur on 29 November 2021 to mark the UK's hosting of the the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) and the climate collaboration with Malaysia. He said:

> Climate change is at the centre of our diplomatic activities because it is our most pressing global problem. We all need to work together to solve it, and if we don't we will fall together.
>
> Together for Our Planet is a core theme of the UK's presidency of

COP26. It sums up the UK’s climate partnership with Malaysia.

The guest of honour at the dinner was HRH The Regent of Pahang, Crown Prince Tengku Hassanal Ibrahim Alam Shah. Also present were Dato’ Seri Dr. Zaini bin Ujang, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Environment and Water, as well as guests representing various government agencies, associations, NGOs and the business community.

At COP26, countries including Malaysia have agreed to the Glasgow Climate Pact and will now deliver on their commitments to revisit and strengthen their 2030 emission reduction targets next year, to bring them in line with the Paris Agreement goals.

Hay welcomed the pledges made by the Malaysian delegation at COP26, led by Minister of Environment and Water, YB Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man. Malaysia has committed to take bold actions to tackle climate change through the country’s enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and its new commitment on achieving carbon neutrality. Malaysia has also endorsed the Glasgow Leaders’ Declaration on Forests and Land Use which champions halting and reversing deforestation, as well the Global Methane Pledge, setting a collective goal to reduce global methane emissions by 30% before 2030.

To respond to a growing momentum for climate action in countries like Malaysia, the UK has doubled its International Climate Finance to £11.6 billion over the 2021-25 period.

At COP26, the UK also announced new support for Malaysia and other Southeast Asia countries. This includes the £110 million ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility, which will support the development of sustainable infrastructure projects such as renewable energy, clean transportation, and urban infrastructure in ASEAN countries, as well as a £274 million fund under the UK Climate Action for a Resilient Asia (CARA) programme, to strengthen climate adaptation across the Indo-Pacific.

In addition, the UK is running a number of bilateral programmes in Malaysia which are contributing in practical ways to building adaptation and resilience, strengthening nature-based solutions, supporting low-carbon city planning, promoting sustainable transport, renewable energy generation, and mobilising green finance.