

CMA to have key oversight role over Google's planned removal of third-party cookies

The CMA is to take up a role in the design and development of Google's Privacy Sandbox proposals to ensure they do not distort competition. The CMA is now launching a consultation on whether to accept Google's commitments. If accepted, the commitments would be legally binding.

The CMA has worked closely with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) in reviewing the Privacy Sandbox proposals and will continue to work closely with the ICO to assess the effectiveness of alternatives to third party cookies being developed under the proposals.

The offer of commitments is a result of enforcement action that the CMA launched against Google in January 2021, when a number of businesses raised concerns about the company's plans to phase out third-party cookies and other functionalities in its Chrome browser.

While there have been privacy concerns about their use, these cookies are used by digital advertisers to personalise and target advertisements more effectively, providing an income stream for free online content such as newspapers.

The CMA was concerned that, without regulatory oversight and scrutiny, Google's alternatives could be developed and implemented in ways that impede competition in digital advertising markets. This would cause advertising spending to become even more concentrated on Google, harming consumers who ultimately pay for the cost of advertising. It would also undermine the ability of online publishers such as newspapers to generate revenue and continue to produce valuable content in the future.

The CMA will now consult on the commitments, which, by involving the CMA and ICO in the development of the proposals, will protect competition in digital advertising markets while safeguarding users' privacy, and which include specific limits on how Google can use and combine customer data for digital advertising.

Andrea Coscelli, the CMA's Chief Executive, said:

The emergence of tech giants such as Google has presented competition authorities around the world with new challenges that require a new approach.

That's why the CMA is taking a leading role in setting out how we can work with the most powerful tech firms to shape their behaviour and protect competition to the benefit of consumers.

If accepted, the commitments we have obtained from Google become legally binding, promoting competition in digital markets, helping to protect the ability of online publishers to raise money through advertising and safeguarding users' privacy.

The substantial and wide-ranging commitments offered by Google to the CMA include:

- A commitment to develop and implement the proposals in a way that avoids distortions to competition and the imposition of unfair terms on Chrome users. This includes a commitment to involve the CMA and the ICO in the development of the Proposals to ensure this objective is met.
- Increased transparency from Google on how and when the proposals will be taken forward and on what basis they will be assessed. This includes a commitment to publicly disclose the results of tests of the effectiveness of alternative technologies.
- Substantial limits on how Google will use and combine individual user data for the purposes of digital advertising after the removal of third-party cookies.
- A commitment that Google will not discriminate against its rivals in favour of its own advertising and ad-tech businesses when designing or operating the alternatives to third-party cookies.
- A standstill period of at least 60 days before Google proceeds with the removal of third party cookies giving the CMA the opportunity, if any outstanding concerns cannot be resolved with Google, to reopen its investigation and, if necessary, impose any interim measures necessary to avoid harm to competition.

The CMA considers these commitments address its concerns and it will now launch a consultation with interested third parties before deciding whether to accept them.

The consultation will close at 5pm on 8 July 2021. The CMA will then make a final decision on whether to accept the commitments offered.

While the commitments aim to address UK competition concerns, they are likely to have implications for the global implementation of Google's Privacy Sandbox proposals.

Further information

- If the commitments are accepted, this would result in the closure of the

CMA's enforcement case, and lead to the next phase of this oversight work for the CMA.

- The CMA would then engage with Google on the details of each of its proposals, participate in the design and assessment of robust trials, and consider the proposals against the criteria set out in Google's commitments.
- Google's proposals would have impacts on both competition and privacy, and therefore the commitments offered set out a clear framework to ensure that both objectives are factored into the proposals as they are developed. Within the notice, the CMA has also set out how it intends to consult with the ICO on aspects of the proposals that relate to data protection.
- This is further evidence of the collaborative partnership between the two regulators, and of the close relationship between the interests of competition and data protection. The [ICO and CMA published a joint statement](#) on the relationship between the aims of competition and data protection last month (May 2021).
- The CMA and the ICO are also part of [The Digital Regulation Co-operation Forum \(DRCF\)](#) alongside Ofcom and the FCA. The DRCF was formed in July 2020, building on the strong working relationships between these organisations. The DRCF was established to ensure a greater level of cooperation, given the unique challenges posed by regulation of online platforms.
- The CMA has committed to engage proactively with international counterparts to promote a joined-up approach.

[UK calls for climate action ahead of UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow](#)

Manila, 10 June 2021 – Together with its Philippine climate defenders, the United Kingdom calls for climate action ahead of UN Climate Change Conference (or COP26) in November in Glasgow, Scotland during a virtual roundtable discussion hosted recently by the British Embassy Manila marking the Philippine Environment Month.

Led by British Ambassador Daniel Pruce, the discussion was joined by COP26 local climate defenders including Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Assistant Governor Lyn Javier (representing Governor Benjamin Diokno), Department of Finance (DOF) Assistant Secretary Paola Alvarez (representing Secretary Carlos Dominguez, III), ASEAN Center for Biodiversity Executive Director Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, Oscar M. Lopez Center Executive Director, Dr. Rodel Lasco, Atty. Jay Layug, and media personalities—Kim Atienza and Atom Araullo.

The climate defenders shared their views on single use plastics, youth engagement, climate risks and governance in the financial system, the role of the business sector in conservation of the Philippines's rich biodiversity and the political will to call for ambitious climate action including moving away from coal and harnessing the country's renewable energy sources.

Her Majesty's Ambassador Daniel Pruce said:

With the Philippines ranking fourth among countries most affected by extreme weather in the 2021 global climate risk index, and with the country's projected loss of 6% of its annual GDP by 2100 due to climate change, COP26 is indeed an important opportunity to advance the country's climate action agenda.

He welcomed the Philippines' submission of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), which will hopefully serve as a basis for a long-term strategy toward net zero, and spoke about the practical ways the UK was supporting the Philippines to transition to clean energy, realise adaptation and resilience, deliver nature-based solutions, make the transition to sustainable transport and mobilise finance to address the country's vulnerability and mitigate the harmful impacts of climate change.

The climate defenders spoke about their own contributions to promoting green policies.

Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda said:

The House of Representatives passed on second reading HB 9147 which seeks to phaseout and eventually ban single-use plastics over a period of 4 years with some earlier within 1 year. The bill also mandates plastic producers and companies to implement extended producers' responsibility schemes—proper recovery, transportation, clean-up, including establishments of recycling, composting, and waste diversion facilities.

DOF Assistant Secretary Paola Alvarez said:

The DOF is mobilising finance for climate change adaptation and mitigation to establish a sustainable finance ecosystem and

synergize investments from both the public and private sectors, that will yield green social projects resulting in positive impact on the world's environment and on our people.

BSP Governor Benjamin Diokno said:

BSP and financial institutions play a crucial part in mobilising funds for financing green and sustainable projects, and at the same time, safeguarding financial stability from shocks and other environment-related factors. The BSP issued the Sustainable Finance Framework in April 2020. It expects banks to embed sustainability principles in corporate and risk management systems, business strategies and operations and complements Securities and Exchange Commission's guidelines pertaining to green, social, or sustainability bonds issuance.

With only five months left before the conference in Glasgow, the virtual roundtable underscored the value of a whole of society approach to respond to the climate challenges that we all face. The British Embassy Manila's COP26 climate defenders are all thought leaders and experts in their fields who have volunteered to raise up their voices and stand alongside the UK government to galvanise action and understanding in the Philippines towards the most ambitious COP26 outcome possible.

The roundtable welcomed a broad range of media representatives and emphasised the critical role the media plays in educating and engaging the public on climate issues. The Embassy, through our information dissemination sessions, will continue engaging the media and our COP26 climate defenders to populate communication materials that will resonate well, not only with the policy makers, but also at the grassroots level.

The virtual event concluded with optimism that through collective effort and ambition, we can rise to the challenges of climate change, at a meaningful COP26 and beyond.

[New plan to drive rapid recovery of tourism sector](#)

- Tourism Recovery Plan to help sector build back better from the pandemic
- Plan aims to recover domestic tourism to pre pandemic levels by 2022 and international tourism by 2023 – both at least a year faster than independent forecasts predict
- New initiatives to boost tourism include £10 million National Lottery

Days Out scheme to support attractions and a new rail pass to encourage domestic breaks

A new rail pass and vouchers for popular tourist attractions are at the heart of a plan to return domestic tourism to pre-pandemic levels by 2022 and international tourism by 2023.

A £10 million voucher scheme will be launched by The National Lottery this autumn to encourage trips beyond the peak summer season, with players having the chance to claim vouchers to redeem at tourist attractions across the UK between September 2021 and March 2022.

A rail pass for “staycationers” will be launched later this year, helping to make it easier and more sustainable for domestic tourists to get around the country. The new pass will build on the success of the BritRail pass, which is sold through VisitBritain and currently gives international visitors flexible travel across the country, as well as providing discounted entry to tourism attractions.

There will be a new focus on technology and data. The government will explore how tourism data collected at the border can support the sector and we will look to create a tourism data hub to give the sector access to robust, accessible and timely data. The hub could track consumer trends in travel, such as the growth in “active tourism” such as watersports and hiking, and booking of sustainable tourism experiences. The data gathered will help inform policy and marketing whilst working to improve visitor experience.

The government will develop a Sustainable Tourism Plan later this year to put the UK at the forefront of the global discussion on sustainable travel. This will look at further measures to reduce the impact of tourism on our environment whilst balancing the needs of local communities with the economic benefits generated by tourism. The Plan will build on the significant investments in sustainable tourism already underway, such as the completion of the England Coast Path – the longest of its type in the world – and the almost £1 billion investment in electric vehicle charging hubs at service stations.

Pre-pandemic, England looked set to hit 100 million domestic overnight trips in 2020. In 2019, 41 million international visitors came to the UK for business or leisure, spending over £28 billion whilst here and putting the UK in the top 5 countries globally for inbound visitor spending.

However the sector has been hugely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with cities amongst the most impacted areas. £19 million has also been earmarked for marketing campaigns to promote cities and towns across the country, with a £5.5 million domestic campaign already underway.

The Government has acted to protect jobs and businesses in the tourism, hospitality and leisure sectors, which have received over £25 billion in the form of grants, loans and tax breaks, including £5 billion in VAT cuts.

The government will also launch a consultation on the introduction of a

Tourist Accommodation Registration Scheme in England. This will consider the benefits of the rise of short term holiday rentals in attracting tourists to destinations across the country and contributing to the English tourism economy, as well as its impact on local economies and communities. The consultation will help us target further government interventions in the future and create an improved national picture of the precise shape of the accommodation landscape which could feed into a wider Data Hub.

The plan also looks ahead to 2022: a massive year for the UK showcasing the nation on the world stage with a triumvirate of major events. Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Festival UK 2022 and the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will promote the very best of Britain at home and abroad. An additional bank holiday for the Queen's Jubilee will provide a further boost for tourism and hospitality while a £24 million Business and Tourism Programme will run alongside the Commonwealth Games to promote Birmingham, the West Midlands and the UK.

The government is determined to level-up the country and to ensure that every region is reaching its full potential. A root and branch review of how tourism at a regional and local level is funded and supported is already underway, focusing on the important role played by Destination Management Organisations, and will report in the summer.

Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston MP said:

Our brilliant tourism sector is one of our country's greatest assets, making a huge contribution to our economy and delivering jobs across all communities. This is why we've provided it with £25 billion in support so far during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Tourism Recovery Plan is our blueprint for how the sector can build back better from the pandemic, even faster than forecasts predict. It's been a challenging year for the tourism sector, especially for our cities, but I know they stand ready to welcome visitors back and I encourage everyone to rediscover the UK's fantastic tourism offer.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart MP said:

Wales has so much to offer visitors, and tourism is key to our economy. Throughout the past year the UK Government has provided this vital sector with necessary support to ensure it builds back even stronger than before the pandemic. Measures announced today that apply in Wales show the UK Government is delivering for one of the sectors that has been hardest hit.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis MP said:

Whether you are visiting the stunning Mourne mountains, the dark hedges, touring filming locations of the Game of Thrones or

enjoying the award-winning food and drink, Northern Ireland's culture is rich, with local towns and cities filled with history, literature and digital innovation.

Today's announcement of the Tourism Recovery Plan is fantastic news, by working with and supporting local businesses, we can showcase the best of Northern Ireland on a global scale. Ensuring we build back better across the country, creating jobs, supporting creativity and economic growth following the pandemic.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart MP said:

"Tourism is a cornerstone of Scotland's economy, so it's fantastic that this ambitious UK Government plan is helping the sector recover.

"Scotland has a huge amount to offer tourists, from our vibrant cities to our spectacular scenery. The launch of a new rail pass will encourage people from across the UK to come and explore our beautiful country while giving the tourism and hospitality sectors a much-needed boost."

Additional quotes

VisitBritain/VisitEngland chairman Lord Patrick McLoughlin said:

The UK Government's Tourism Recovery Plan is a welcome and important step on the industry's road to recovery, recognising the economic potential of the sector, setting out a clear policy direction for the future and outlining the ambitions for domestic and international tourism.

Tourism is a critical industry, a powerhouse of innovation, creativity and employment, injecting cash into the economy with a track record for growth and levelling-up, supporting local economies in every part of the UK and strengthening our place on the world stage.

By working together to drive demand and build back visitor spend as quickly as possible we can emerge from the pandemic and also look towards a brighter future building an industry that is more resilient, sustainable, inclusive and innovative.

Our spending review bid this year will seek to support the plan's ambitions and to build on the successful projects we have been running, working with the UK Government and across the industry to cement the recovery and the future of one of this country's greatest industries.

Kate Nicholls, Chief Executive Officer, UK Hospitality, said:

The Tourism Recovery Plan is a hugely positive and welcome recognition of the social, economic and cultural importance of the hospitality and tourism sector. It is not only our third largest export earner but also domestically it delivers jobs, growth and investment at pace and scale in communities across the UK. This strategic plan will not only expedite hospitality's recovery but also the national recovery post COVID. We look forward to working collaboratively across Government departments, to help build resilience and international competitiveness and catalyse cultural and economic renaissance.

Michael Hirst OBE, Chairman, Events Industry Board, said:

Meetings and conferences, exhibitions and trade shows are crucial to the UK's recovery in showcasing innovation, growing international visitors, attracting inward investment and creating jobs. We are delighted to see this recognised within the Recovery Plan which includes expansion of VisitBritain's support programmes to include a UK-wide domestic fund, greater cross Whitehall working and enhanced Ministerial advocacy support plus elements related to sustainability, skills and accessibility. We are committed to working with government to ensure the UK retains and enhances its position as a leading European nation for hosting business events.

Amanda Cupples, General Manager for Northern Europe at Airbnb, said:

Airbnb is preparing for what we believe will be the travel rebound of the century and we want to work with the Government to help everyone benefit. Clear rules to back Britain's hospitality entrepreneurs will accelerate the recovery of tourism and support local families and communities. We have worked with communities across the UK on proposals for a tourism accommodation register and we are delighted to see the Government take this work forward. We will continue to work with everyone to support the recovery of tourism and help the UK to build back better.

Simon Vincent, Hilton President for Europe, Middle East and Africa, said:

The hospitality and tourism sector has faced unique challenges during the pandemic so we welcome this plan which provides much needed focus and support to aid the recovery. Crucially it recognises the critical role our sector will play in creating jobs and helping communities across the UK build back faster and better.

As an industry we look forward to working alongside Government Departments to deliver the Tourism Recovery Plan, creating thousands of jobs, investing in communities, and showcasing the

world beating attractions the UK has to offer – while shaping the new era of sustainable travel together.

Notes to editors:

For more information on where to visit this summer see:

[UK to donate 100 million coronavirus vaccine doses](#)

- The UK will donate at least 100 million surplus coronavirus vaccine doses within the next year, including 5 million beginning in the coming weeks
- Donation is in addition to UK work to support Oxford-AstraZeneca's contribution to fighting COVID and our financial backing to COVAX
- G7 leaders are expected to agree to provide 1 billion doses via dose sharing and financing to end the pandemic in 2022

The UK will donate 100 million surplus coronavirus vaccine doses to the world within the next year, the Prime Minister has announced today (11 June 2021).

The pledge comes ahead of the G7 Summit, which begins in Cornwall today. Last week the Prime Minister asked fellow G7 leaders to help vaccinate the entire world by the end of next year.

At the Summit world leaders are expected to announce they will provide at least 1 billion coronavirus vaccine doses to the world through dose sharing and financing and set out a plan to expand vaccine manufacturing in order to achieve that goal.

The UK will donate 5 million doses by the end of September, beginning in the coming weeks, primarily for use in the world's poorest countries. The Prime Minister has also committed to donating a further 95 million doses within the next year, including 25 million more by the end of 2021. 80% of the 100m doses will go to COVAX and the remainder will be shared bilaterally with countries in need.

By sharing 5 million doses in the coming weeks the UK will meet an immediate demand for vaccines for the countries worst affected by coronavirus without delaying completion of our initial domestic vaccination programme.

By vaccinating more people around the world not only will we help bring an end to the global coronavirus pandemic, we will reduce the risk to people in the UK. This includes significantly reducing the threat posed by vaccine-resistant variants emerging in areas with large-scale outbreaks.

The UK helped to establish COVAX last year and is its fourth-biggest donor, pledging £548 million to the scheme. COVAX has so far provided 81 million doses to 129 of the world's poorest countries. 96% of these were the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, the development of which was funded by the UK.

With the support of the UK Government, Oxford-AstraZeneca are distributing their vaccines on a not for profit basis the world. Thanks to this commitment, half a billion people have received a dose of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine so far.

The Prime Minister said:

Since the start of this pandemic the UK has led the way in efforts to protect humanity against this deadly disease. Over a year ago we funded the development of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine on the basis it would be distributed at cost to the world.

This unprecedented model, which puts people squarely above profit, means over half a billion doses have been administered in 160 countries so far.

As a result of the success of the UK's vaccine programme we are now in a position to share some of our surplus doses with those who need them. In doing so we will take a massive step towards beating this pandemic for good.

At the G7 Summit I hope my fellow leaders will make similar pledges so that, together, we can vaccinate the world by the end of next year and build back better from coronavirus.

At the G7 leaders will also discuss how to expand the supply of vaccines internationally, with the Prime Minister asking the group to encourage pharmaceutical companies to adopt the Oxford-AstraZeneca model of providing vaccines of cost for the duration of the pandemic. Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson have already pledged to share 1.3 billion doses on a non-profit basis with developing countries.

Leaders are expected to discuss additional ways to support countries experiencing acute coronavirus emergencies and put in place mechanisms to prevent future pandemics. This follows on from commitments made at the virtual meeting of G7 leaders earlier this year.

The cost of donating the UK's surpluses will be classified as ODA. This will be in addition to the £10bn already committed in aid this year.

The doses the UK has announced it will donate today will be drawn from the UK's expected excess supply. The 100 million figure has been calculated based on the total needed to vaccinate the UK population, factoring in the possibility of future vaccine-resistant strains being detected and potential disruptions to our supply.

Later this year the UK will also host the UN climate change conference, COP26. Today the UK is also announcing that in order to enable more representatives to attend safely we will work to provide vaccines to those accredited delegations who would be unable to get them otherwise. We are exploring with the UN and partners how we can work together to deliver this offer.

This will mean that those countries most affected by climate change are better able to participate fully in discussions about creating a greener future for the planet.

[More high-quality degree alternatives to boost adult skills and job prospects](#)

Adults will be able to access more, high-quality alternatives to university degrees under new measures to boost the nation's skills and job prospects.

The package will help colleges and universities invest in new equipment that will support technical studies, and boost training opportunities with businesses in areas such as digital and construction.

It will also create new, shorter courses for working adults in STEM subjects like engineering and manufacturing, giving those wishing to upskill or retrain greater flexibility in how and when they study.

Boosting the uptake and quality of Higher Technical Education – technical qualifications that sit between A Levels and degrees – and supporting adults to study more flexibly throughout their lives is a key part of the [Government's landmark reforms to post-16 education and training](#).

A major review of Higher Technical Education revealed these qualifications can unlock the [skills employers need](#), can lead to well paid jobs and help support the country to build back better from the pandemic.

Despite this, only [4% of young people achieve a qualification at higher technical level by the age of 25](#) compared to the 33% who get a degree or above.

The funding will be invested from Summer 2021 to kickstart work to ensure more Higher Technical Education is on offer across the country, providing more people with high-quality alternatives to university degrees.

The package consists of:

- A new £18 million Growth Fund to support further and higher education providers to expand high-quality Higher Technical Education. The fund will help providers to invest in equipment and develop the business links they need to offer training that will meet growing employer demands for skills in sectors including Digital, Construction, Health and Science.
- Up to £10 million for Institutes of Technology to develop and deliver higher technical short and modular courses in STEM disciplines like engineering, manufacturing, construction and digital. Aimed at working adults, these courses, which will be available from Autumn 2021, will be free to access and will support people to rapidly reskill or upskill to meet local economic needs.
- £2 million to support the development and delivery of high-quality modular training focused on upskilling employees to help address future skills gaps in high value manufacturing. The High Value Manufacturing Catapult, an organisation that supports businesses to harness innovation, have been appointed to lead this [exciting new project](#), working with Institutes of Technology.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Investment in higher technical skills will support more people to secure exciting and rewarding careers, fill skills gaps in our economy and help us build back better from the pandemic.

We also want to counter the myth that a degree is the only way to a good job. This funding will help open up more high quality training alternatives for people, empowering them to get the skills they need to build the life they want, wherever they live.

Higher technical training is currently offered at Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) institutions, but [research](#) shows that the quality of courses on offer can be variable and it can be hard for students and employers to find the ones that are right for them.

From September 2022 the government will start rolling out newly approved Higher Technical Qualifications, starting with Digital.

Construction and Health and Science will follow in 2023 with a full suite of qualifications rolled out by 2025.

Qualifications will only be approved where they provide the skills employers need, so students and employers can be confident the courses on offer will provide the skills they need to succeed.

The Government's network of [Institutes of Technology](#) – unique collaborations between universities, FE colleges, and leading employers – will also specialise in delivering high-quality Higher Technical Education and training in STEM subjects, such as digital, advanced manufacturing and engineering that will provide employers with the skilled workforce they need.

Higher Technical Qualifications will provide a natural progression route for young people taking new T Levels or A Levels, and adults looking to upskill or retrain, enabling them to take the next step up and gain higher technical skills in key subjects like STEM.