

# John Glen addresses Which? Cash Summit

Good afternoon everyone. It's great to join you at the Which? Cash Summit. I'm particularly pleased to have the opportunity to update you on the great progress we're making on our commitment to protect cash.

## **Context**

But first, let me start off by setting out some context. I always think there's something quite amazing about the fact that cash has been with us in some form for the best part of three millennia. In fact, there's a remarkable similarity between the first coins made in Turkey back in 600BC and the Pound in our pockets.

But in recent years, there's been something of a sea change in the way people pay for goods and services. Between 2009 and 2019, cash use dropped from almost two thirds of payments to less than a quarter.

And, as we've been hearing today, the events of the past 12 months have also led to significant changes to our relationship with coins and notes. In fact, some 70% of respondents to the Bank of England's January 2021 consumer survey said they were using less cash than before the pandemic. And 48% said they could manage more than a month without cash – up from 32% pre-Covid.

While it's too early to judge the long-term impact of the pandemic on cash use, it is fair to say it has had a significant impact – at least at this point in time.

But while the world is changing, we in government are also very much aware that cash is still incredibly important to many people.

For my part, I'm very conscious of the need to strike a balance between protecting cash, while simultaneously welcoming innovation.

I know some commentators have compared cash and digital payments to other previous technological shifts to demonstrate that progress does not signify the end of much-loved practices or activities.

To choose a very relevant example, I'm sure everyone here today would attest to the fact that virtual meeting methods, have proven incredibly valuable over the past year. And I'm sure in future, when restrictions are lifted, this technology will still be used very frequently. But will an online call spell the end of in person chats and meetings? Quite obviously, not a bit of it.

## **Covid Response**

But, Equally, while some of us have moved to newer types of payment, there is still an important role for cash. That's why in last year's Budget, the Government committed to legislating to protect cash for those who need it most.

Of course, just five days after we made that announcement, we went into the first lockdown. I'll talk briefly about the Government's response to this unprecedented situation in relation to cash.

We knew straight away that we needed to take immediate action to safeguard cash access and supply. That meant working closely with our financial regulators and the industry to make sure essential banking services were open to those who needed them, while customers and staff stayed safe.

While I'm on this subject I'd like to extend my sincere gratitude to the many front-line workers in banks and building society branches who helped customers throughout the crisis. Their work, along with industry-led initiatives, such as cash deliveries to people's homes and carers' cards for trusted third parties, have meant most people have been able to obtain cash and make payments when they've needed to.

There's no doubt that safeguarding cash supply and access has been a real focus for the Treasury over the past year. But alongside those efforts, we've also been working hard at developing the long-term legislation that will enable us to fulfil our commitment to protect cash.

### **Cashback without Purchase**

While the work continues, we're also seizing opportunities to move faster to protect cash for those who rely upon it.

Take our recent legislative change to make it easier for shops and other businesses to offer cashback to customers, without those customers having to buy anything.

That's a great example of the Government driving forward a targeted change that will allow us to safeguard access to cash.

Previously, under legislation derived from EU regulations, merchants that wanted to offer this cashback service would have to be authorised by or registered with the Financial Conduct Authority.

However, the new measure, which will come into force from June, removes this requirement and with it a potentially significant burden for many businesses, especially small shops.

It's been really heartening to see the very warm welcome that this development has received from retail and consumer groups, including 'Which?'.

I'm convinced this change has the potential to be very significant. It opens up new ways for people to access their money. In addition, it could help to ensure that cash is used multiple times in a local area, rather than being transported back to a cash centre between each use.

### **Role of Industry**

However, if cashback without a purchase is going to be a real success, we need the financial industry to play its part too, by making it easy and cost

effective for retailers to provide this service.

Because while the Government can lay the legislative foundations, it's down to industry to build upon them. As the way that we use cash changes, the industry will continue to play a crucial role, right across our cash infrastructure. For instance, by continuing to provide withdrawal and deposit facilities across the United Kingdom as well as by driving innovation.

On this last point, I know there's some exciting work underway involving our industry partners.

Take the Community Access for Cash Pilots, which are testing new solutions in a number of areas that could be adopted by communities elsewhere. The pilots were launched last month, with the support of banks, consumer groups and small business representatives. And I know that many of you here today have been involved, and you're going to hear from the Cash Pilots Chair Natalie Ceeney later on.

The scheme includes some very interesting projects. For instance, people living in Rochford, in Essex, and Cambuslang, near Glasgow are benefitting from Post Office banking hubs – dedicated high street spaces, which combine cash facilities with retail banking services.

It's very good to hear about these projects' warm reception because this is exactly the kind of fresh thinking we want to see.

And, it's really positive to see that industry is being proactive on this issue; just this morning UK Finance has published an update on further work that its members will be undertaking to ensure cash is protected.

And, while we're on the subject of new initiatives let me also welcome Which?'s Cash Acceptance Pledge. While I believe businesses should be able to choose which forms of payment they accept – it's nonetheless great to see voluntary initiatives like this where retailers can show their support for customers' ability to spend using notes and cash.

## **Consultation**

I'll now move on to our commitment to protect access to cash and ensure that the UK's cash infrastructure is sustainable in the long-term.

And, there are two parts to this, which I'll address in turn.

Firstly, on the wholesale cash network. This is the UK's network of cash centres that are integral to the sorting, storing and distribution of coins and notes, and make it possible to access cash.

Obviously, as cash use declines, we need to work together to ensure this network is fit for the future. That's why the Bank of England brought together the industry to help design a new model for the network. And, we welcome the progress on this work so far and look forward to seeing further steps this summer.

Alongside this, the Government will continue to work closely with the Bank to ensure it has the powers it needs to keep this network sustainable and resilient into the future.

Secondly, since we made our Budget commitment, we've also been focused on making sure legislation protects people's ability to access the notes and coins they need for their daily lives.

And, I know that many of you here today took the time to contribute to our Call for Evidence last year. A big thank you from me to you all.

Take it from me – your input is critical to our work's success. And today I'm pleased to announce the next stage: a consultation on our legislative proposals, which I'm delighted to announce we will be launching this summer.

## **Approach**

Let me turn briefly to what the consultation will cover.

Our approach focuses on making sure we find the balance between supporting the use of cash by individuals and businesses, while allowing flexibility in terms of how this is achieved as the cash landscape continues to evolve.

Therefore, we're going to be setting out proposals for establishing requirements that ensure people and businesses can access cash withdrawal and depositing facilities, over time, within reasonable travel distances.

As you'll be aware, at present, industry, notably banks, plays a key role in ensuring these facilities are available, whether through branches, or by funding customer transactions at ATMs or Post Office counters. And we expect them to continue to do so under our approach. Our consultation will therefore set out proposals on which organisations should be in scope of the legislation.

And, the consultation will also cover the role of regulatory oversight. That means giving our regulators appropriate responsibilities and powers without placing undue burdens on businesses.

Through this work, it's crucial we build on the very effective coordination between the Financial Conduct Authority, the Payments Systems Regulator and the Bank of England, that we've seen in recent months – for instance, when working with industry to maintain services during the pandemic.

I know that you're going to hear from one of those regulators a little later – Sheldon Mills, who along with his team at the FCA, has already completed excellent work on cash access and today set out further details on the FCA's approach with firms on access to cash and other banking services.

As we've previously indicated, the Government believes the FCA would be best placed to play a leading role in holding firms to account on access to cash, so that the needs of consumers and businesses are met. And our consultation will therefore seek views on proposals to ensure the FCA is properly positioned for this role.

Again, we'll be keen to hear your views on this and I'm sure you will be very keen to share your thoughts.

I'll finish today with a few reflections.

The past year has undoubtedly been a challenging one. The long-term impact of the pandemic is yet to emerge. Meanwhile technology is changing the financial world at an exponential pace. Amid all this, what is clear is the need to protect access to cash for those who rely on it.

As I've illustrated, the government is making significant progress. But if there's one message I'd like to leave you with this afternoon, it is that this is not a job for us alone. It's a shared commitment, that all of us, not least those in the financial services industry, have a duty to fulfil.

And I look forward to working with all of you as we make good on that commitment for the benefit of all society.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you and I look forward to hearing the productive outcomes and outputs from your panel discussions.

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## [New interim deputy chief medical officer for England announced](#)

News story

The Department of Health and Social Care has confirmed that Dr Thomas Waite has been appointed as interim deputy chief medical officer for England.



Dr Thomas Waite will support Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Professor Chris Whitty, Deputy Chief Medical Officer (DCMO) Professor Jonathan Van Tam and the UK government on tackling coronavirus (COVID-19) related issues for the next year.

Dr Waite is a consultant epidemiologist. After his medical and public health

training in Wales, he held posts in infectious disease and environmental health protection at Public Health England and more recently was Director of the UK Field Epidemiology Training Programme and worked in Global Public Health with the PHE National Infection Service.

During the pandemic, Dr Waite helped create the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) – which provides evidence-based, objective analysis to inform local and national decision-making in response to COVID-19 outbreaks – and has been their Director of Health Analysis. He will take up the position in the coming weeks and will continue to support the JBC as needed.

Dr Thomas Waite said:

I am delighted to join the Chief Medical Officer's team. I look forward to supporting the national, regional and local response to COVID-19.

This has been an unprecedented period and I am hugely honoured to work with colleagues across the country to improve the health of the nation and keep people safe as we emerge from the pandemic.

Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer said:

Dr Waite has done an excellent job helping create the Joint Biosecurity Centre and has an in-depth understanding on COVID-19 issues. His wealth of experience in epidemiology and emergency preparedness will benefit the government's ongoing public health response.

A substantive DCMO for Health Improvement, who will help lead the Office of Health Promotion, will be recruited in the coming weeks.

The CMO acts as the UK government's principal medical adviser, and the professional head of all directors of public health in local government and the medical profession in government.

The CMO is an independent position at permanent secretary level, supported by 3 DCMOs. The role provides public health and clinical advice to ministers in the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and across government.

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# Lord Chancellor's speech: London International Disputes Week

It's a pleasure to join you for what I hope will be the last London International Dispute Week to take place completely virtually. I expect the hybrid model will become important for all of us.

I know just how important this event is becoming to the sector and I am sure that colleagues have benefitted hugely from the programme this year, including my colleague Lord Wolfson's session with the Chair of the Bar Council and the President of the Law Society.

There is much we can learn from each other and I am very keen that we make the best use of these opportunities. Take, for instance, the Standing International Forum of Commercial Courts where the judiciary shares best practice with like-minded jurisdictions. You may have attended the panel earlier in the week presented by this forum, chaired by Lord Thomas and introduced by Mr Justice Robin Knowles, where the future of dispute resolution globally was discussed.

With the theme of this year's conference in mind, I will talk to you today about the challenges we face, the changes we are all experiencing, and the shared opportunities that exist for all of us.

If the last year has shown us anything, it is that in this era of globalisation, challenges are increasingly shared ones, and opportunities are increasingly shared opportunities. Now more than ever before, a collaborative approach is often necessary and essential to overcome unexpected barriers and take advantage of new ways to achieving our collective ambitions.

This, of course, extends to the international legal services sector, where collective responses to change have more than proven their worth in these unprecedented times.

I am sure that the experience here in the UK in this regard resembles those of many other countries. Whilst we continue to be a strong player, the challenge for us has been developing strategies to ensure that we continue to deliver for our international clients and to grow as a world-leading provider of international legal services. We also must ensure that any such strategies deliver success and good outcomes not just for England and Wales but also for our sister jurisdictions in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Thanks to the ties that we have maintained with colleagues around the world, I am pleased to say that as things stand four of the largest twenty law firms globally have their main base of operations here in the United Kingdom and there are more than two hundred foreign law firms based here, from more than forty different jurisdictions.

We have therefore experienced first-hand the benefits of connecting with our

counterparts across the world and capitalising on our respective strengths to address issues that continue to affect us all – and I think this is the spirit which underpins London International Disputes Week.

Such an approach has also come to the fore in the UK as we negotiate Free Trade Agreements and build stronger trading relations with our global partners. Not only are legal services an important part of these discussions in their own right but, as we all know, legal services underpin global trade and investment. A flourishing legal services sector therefore supports the growth of global trade and investment for the benefit of all the jurisdictions here in the UK.

However, access to effective commercial dispute resolution is also a cornerstone of global commerce and the availability of cost-effective and reliable services in this field underpins business confidence itself. In the UK, I firmly believe this is one of our strengths. London in particular is a global hub for dispute resolution, with almost eighty per cent of claims in the Commercial Court in 2019 involving at least one party from outside the jurisdiction of England and Wales and 64% of parties surveyed by Queen Mary University in 2018 named London as their preferred seat of arbitration.

This reputation has undeniably benefitted the UK and has made it a popular place to do business internationally. But, maintaining this attractiveness is not without its challenges. As disputes become ever more complex and international in nature we must learn from our colleagues across the globe and through innovation and the sharing of knowledge and experience.

London International Disputes Week has been another great opportunity for us to do this. Professionals from around the globe have been able to come together to discuss all manner of issues affecting global dispute resolution, both here and now, and in the future. A personal highlight was hearing from The Honourable Bart Katureebe, Chief Justice Emeritus of Uganda, who provided us invaluable insight into the ways in which commercial courts can play a key role in driving business growth.

One particularly pertinent part of his speech was his emphasis on the importance of the transfer of expertise and skills between developed and developing countries. As he noted insightfully, each country has its own strengths. My own opinion is that it is in all of our interests to share those strengths in order to achieve our mutual goals – and making the most of diversity of experience in the international context is a core element of this process. That concept of mutuality is something I cannot stress enough.

The importance of diversity of perspective brings me on to another point: if the UK is to remain a global leader in this space, it must ensure that the sector becomes truly diverse at all levels. This very important issue was spoken about in detail by my colleague Lord Wolfson alongside Stephanie Boyce, President of the Law Society and Derek Sweeting QC, Chair of the Bar Council.

From this discussion, it was clear that the international reputation of the UK legal services sector rests very much on our continued commitment to



improving diversity and inclusion within the profession. This is because in order to deliver real justice, we must be representative of the society we as a profession serve.

I speak of reputation, and there is no doubt that a large portion of the UK's international position rests upon global acknowledgement of the fairness and effectiveness of its legal system.

Our collective response to keeping the system running effectively during the last year – in which the governments of the four nations of the United Kingdom, the judiciary, and the legal sector have worked together to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic – has proven once again the extent to which this cooperative manner of addressing challenges yields great benefits.

Throughout, the government has been determined to increase the capacity of the courts wherever possible to tackle the accumulation of cases that inevitably built up as a result of the pandemic. And we have rapidly expanded the use of technology throughout the system to enable a gigantic increase in remote hearings.

This digitisation of the courts is something that we were already engaged with before COVID-19. As we begin to move beyond the pandemic, this work is more important than ever – and this inevitably will have implications for the law more widely.

In a more digitised world, consumers will demand more efficient and less expensive ways to gain access to legal services and resolve disputes – just as they frankly now can access a range of existing services at the push of a button.

The word 'normal', a word to which I usually have an aversion, but we all know what it means in this context, was already beginning to change but it will undoubtedly look a lot different from how it did fifteen months ago. As we look forward, we know that the challenge – in maintaining London and the UK's reputation as one of the premier choices for international dispute resolution – will require us to be at the very forefront of change.

Re-defining the nature of dispute resolution will also form an important component of the government's approach to that change. When it comes to resolving disputes, court is rarely the best option, let's be frank about it. Despite this, parties regularly resort to litigation when simpler and faster alternatives such as mediation and conciliation exist.

For too long, these approaches have been viewed as "alternative" dispute resolution, as an add-on or diversion for people seeking to solve a dispute. I want to change this, and to embrace radical ways to get parties to use processes which achieve resolution without having to go to court. I thoroughly agree with the Master of the Rolls who addressed you on Monday that these processes should no longer be seen as "alternative" but as integral to our justice system. Let me be clear about that – integral. This approach is something I want to be at the heart of our new response to building confidence in our justice system and in how we rebuild after

COVID-19.

My department is currently exploring ways to ensure that parties can access the most appropriate methods for resolving their legal problems – supporting them to resolve disputes more efficiently, so that they can get back to business as quickly as possible. We are looking for input from the sector and warmly welcome ideas on how we could make this work, and I invite you to get in touch with my officials at the Ministry of Justice.

My aim is to deliver a justice system across our three jurisdictions that is more accessible than any other jurisdiction on this planet. Similar initiatives are underway in Scotland and Northern Ireland. I am confident that together we can make the three great jurisdictions of the UK the best place in the world to resolve a dispute.

The adoption of new technologies and innovations is also at the heart of embracing change. The importance of technology has become apparent to us all in recent times. As the legal services sector continues to evolve, Lawtech will provide it with tools to continue supporting clients in ways that are quicker and more effective.

The UK's legal sector is already championing the kind of innovation that will characterise the law in the future by promoting and developing new technology that will accelerate the delivery of global legal services.

The task for us in government is to support you as a flourishing legal services sector and a world leading Lawtech sector, which is why we have funded and developed LawtechUK, an initiative to help transform the legal sector through technology.

LawtechUK has a comprehensive work programme, building on the many initiatives already going on in the sector. Its aim is to support and encourage Lawtech to provide what businesses and society need from legal services and dispute resolution in the modern age.

I was very pleased to see the UK Jurisdiction Taskforce launch the ground-breaking Digital Disputes Resolution Rules (DDR) last month. These rules will facilitate the fast and efficient resolution of disputes arising from digital assets, smart contracts, blockchain and other new technologies. Sir Geoffrey Vos, who chairs the UK Jurisdiction Taskforce, eloquently set out the importance of this development in his Monday address to you.

I know that LawtechUK worked closely with the sector to draft the rules and will continue to keep a close watch on how they are used and what could be done to improve them in the future.

Just as the Legal Statement on the Status of Cryptoassets and Smart Contracts was welcomed by jurisdictions globally in late 2019, I am confident that the DDR Rules will be as well-received by our international partners as the previous statement was.

Earlier on, I mentioned the importance of working together to overcome challenges. It is equally important to collaborate in order to make the most

of opportunities that have the potential to benefit us all. A pertinent example of this is the ongoing matter of the UK Government's decision over whether the UK should sign and ratify the Singapore Convention on Mediation.

Our current thinking is that doing so could help us to maintain London and the UK as an attractive Disputes Resolution hub, and, more generally, would promote international mediation. This would give parties even greater opportunity to access justice.

With this in mind, we will shortly begin a public consultation on the Singapore Convention, with the aim of understanding from the sector what impact it could have. I welcome your thoughts on these matters.

However, we do face other challenges. As many of you will be aware, last week the European Commission issued a Communication to the European Parliament and the European Council in which their assessment is that the United Kingdom, should not be permitted to accede to the Lugano Convention.

This assessment is in line with the Commission's long-stated view that participation is linked to the internal market and the United Kingdom, as a third country, should have a different arrangement than that of the EU and EFTA.

This position has no legal basis. The Lugano Convention is an international agreement, specifically open to third parties with no requirement for single market membership and the UK meets all criteria for accession.

In talking to my fellow justice ministers across Europe, I have been clear that we shouldn't let ideology get in the way of sensible, pragmatic cooperation on issues of mutual interest which are of genuine benefit not just to us but to EU citizens and businesses. It is not the big multi-national law-firms, with respect to those on the call, that will feel the impact of this. Rather it harms our joint communities, particularly consumers, SMEs and financially vulnerable families.

The European Council will be taking a view on our application and we know that member states are divided on the merits of the UK application, with many thinking pragmatically and voicing their support.

In this climate of challenge and change, we must stand ready to seize every opportunity. The MoJ's Union Strategy will prioritise the promotion of the UK-wide legal sector and legal services in the three jurisdictions – boosting jobs and the economy across England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. We will work closely with the devolved administrations to ensure the continued success of legal services.

We are acutely aware of the importance of engaging with emerging markets in Africa and the Middle East and, have an extensive programme of work here at the Ministry to do so. A large portion of this is concerned with promoting the value of collaborative international working and developing shared opportunity.

For instance, the events organised by our "Legal Services are GREAT" campaign

have promoted UK firms, but have also encouraged collaboration between us and our partners. These types of partnerships can be a great boost to the innovation that will underpin the delivery of legal services in the future.

Those in the sector who have chosen to partner with us have derived great benefit from doing so. At the recent UK-Africa Spring Conference, for example, feedback from the 246 delegates showed that this cooperative event enabled them to sell their own services, build networks of contacts in new markets, and enter into partnerships that will be of huge mutual benefit.

I invite you to consider the involvement of your own firms in similar future events, such as a Middle East Virtual Trade Mission which will take place this summer.

I would like to close by suggesting that the most pressing challenge at the moment is to ensure a strong recovery from COVID-19 and my priority is to recover, to rebuild and to restore the justice system to its rightful place at the heart of our society and the foundation of our strong economy. This will require change and will depend on our openness to innovation and to cooperation with partners old and partners new.

For my part, I will continue to do everything possible at home and abroad to contribute to our mutual objectives of advancement and prosperity. Thank you.

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## [Working from home? Customers may be eligible to claim tax relief in 2021 to 2022](#)

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is accepting tax relief claims for working from home due to coronavirus during 2021 to 2022. More than 550,000 employed workers have already claimed and are benefitting from the tax relief.

If employed workers were told to work at home by their employer because of coronavirus and, as a result, their household costs have increased, they are eligible to claim the working from home tax relief. It is quick and easy to claim via HMRC's online portal.

HMRC received more than 3 million claims for the tax relief for the 2020 to 2021 tax year.

[Myrtle Lloyd](#), HMRC's Director General for Customer Services, said:

Half a million people have already reduced their Income Tax this year by up to £125, by claiming tax relief on their working from

home expenses.

We want everyone who's eligible to benefit, so we've made it quick and easy to do online. Check if you're eligible and apply at GOV.UK by searching 'working from home tax relief'.

HMRC is continuing to help and support people affected by the pandemic.

From 6 April 2020, the amount employers have been able to pay tax-free without employees having to provide evidence of an increased bill is up to £6 a week. Employees who have not received the working from home expenses payment direct from their employer can apply to receive the tax relief from HMRC.

Eligible customers can claim tax relief based on the rate at which they pay tax. For example, if an employed worker pays the 20% basic rate of tax and claims tax relief on £6 a week, they would receive £1.20 a week in tax relief (20% of £6 a week) towards the cost of their household bills.

Higher rate taxpayers would receive £2.40 a week (40% of £6 a week). Over the course of the year, this could mean customers can reduce the tax they pay by £62.40 or £124.80 respectively.

To claim for tax relief for working from home, [employees can apply directly](#) via GOV.UK for free. Once their application has been approved, the online portal will adjust their tax code for the 2021 to 2022 tax year. They will receive the tax relief directly through their salary until March 2022.

If employees were required to work from home last year but did not claim for the tax relief, they have not missed out; HMRC will accept backdated claims for up to 4 years. They will receive a lump sum payment for any successful backdated claims.

Using an agent to apply for the working from home tax relief, and other similar schemes, could result in customers paying unnecessary fees or commission. Using the GOV.UK service is quick and free, and customers will receive 100% of the tax relief that is due. Agents will not be able to use the online portal to apply for the relief on a customer's behalf.

The number of claims made in 2021 to 2022 is 558,764, as at 9 May 2021, and refers to online portal claims only.

Find out more about [claiming tax relief on work related expenses](#).

See the [online portal for working from home expenses](#).

Since 6 April 2003, employers have been able to make tax free payments to meet or reimburse additional household costs to employees who work at home under homeworking arrangements.

Employees do not need to provide evidence to show their bills have increased

unless they are applying for tax relief on costs above the £6 per week flat rate; then evidence of the increased costs may be required.

Employees will receive the tax relief that corresponds with the Income Tax rate that they pay. For example, it will differ in Scotland.

If an employed worker completes an annual tax return, they can apply for the tax relief via their Self Assessment.

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## **Rapid sanitising technology improves ambulance cleaning times and standards**

### **An urgent response**

The coronavirus pandemic prompted an urgent need to find quicker, more efficient ways to clean ambulances. After transporting a patient suspected of having COVID-19, an ambulance cannot be used until it is fully sanitised. Previously, a full clean could take up to two hours, adding strain and delay on an already busy and pressurised service.

In March 2020, the Welsh Government approached the Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) for help in finding innovative solutions to speed up the cleaning of ambulances. Shortly afterwards, a call was launched, receiving over 200 responses within seven days. Hygiene Pro Clean was one of just [12 suppliers selected for testing](#) and their product is now being adopted by the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust (WAST).

### **Achieving efficiencies**

Hygiene Pro Clean have designed an ultrasonic atomisation delivery system which disperses a highly effective decontamination solution (Decon Pro Clean) in a soft plume-shaped spray; this ensures uniform distribution of the liquid to minimise overspray and waste. The system, combined with HPC's training and protocols, provides an effective decontamination of any void or space. Adopting this technology has brought about many savings for WAST, including reducing the time it takes to clean an ambulance as well as achieving significant staffing efficiencies – enabling crew to undertake other duties while the ambulance is being cleaned.

### **Award-winning collaboration**

The call – a collaboration between the Welsh Government, WAST, and the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) Centre drew upon experience and expertise from DASA and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) to find and test possible cleaning solutions. Input from DASA included the framework

for promoting, managing and reviewing proposals, enabling the team to accelerate the project from discovery to physical trials within just six weeks.

To celebrate the success of this call, SBRI and WAST received a [St David Award for Innovation, Science and Technology](#) in 2021.