

# [NIO announces appointment of Non-Executive Directors](#)

News story

The Northern Ireland Office has announced the appointment of two new non-executive directors



The Northern Ireland Office today announced the appointment of two new non-executive directors.

Leslie Philpott has been appointed as Lead Non-Executive Director, and Louise Wilson has been appointed as Non-Executive Director. They will each take up their new role on 1 October 2020.

## **Terms of appointment**

The positions are part-time appointments for three years.

The lead non-Executive Director position attracts a fixed remuneration of £12,500 per annum for a commitment of approximately 20 days per year.

The Non-Executive Director position attracts a fixed remuneration of £7,500 a year for a time commitment of approximately 10 days a year.

These positions are not pensionable.

## **Biography of Appointees**

Leslie Philpott is a Chartered Accountant with a background in public finance and leadership at senior executive levels. He is a former Chief Executive the Office for Nuclear Regulation and had previously held senior roles in Health and Safety Executive.

Louise Wilson is a former entrepreneur who founded and led her own global strategic marketing and sponsorship consultancy business. She has 15 years' experience as an active Non-Executive Director and Trustee across a diverse range of business and charitable organisations.

## Civil news: faster payments and new fees for immigration work

### News story

Changes to fee arrangements for immigration and asylum work are being rolled out on 7 October 2020.



Details of the new rates which will apply from 7 October 2020 are set out in the amended regulations.

There are also changes to speed up payments to providers.

The new hourly rates apply to controlled legal representation (CLR) work under the 2018 civil contract, which has now been amended.

The range of immigration and asylum work covered by the new hourly rates is set out in the contract specification under section 8.71.

Also included in the regulations are details of fixed fees for advocacy services.

### **Faster payments**

Changes are also being made immediately which will allow faster payments to be made to providers:

In asylum cases, providers will now be able to bill for legal help matters after the case has been fully prepared.

Billing is also now simpler where controlled work is referred from the upper tribunal back to the first-tier tribunal. Providers will be able to bill after receiving the upper tribunal decision that the first tier is being

asked to reconsider the case.

## Further information

[Standard Civil Contract 2018](#) – see especially 8.71 of the revised immigration specification

[Civil Legal Aid \(Remuneration\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 2\) \(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#) – online hourly rates are in table 8(ca) and fixed fees for online advocacy services are in table 4(ca).

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## [Virtual farewell for Honduran Chevening scholars](#)

World news story

The British Ambassador hosted a virtual farewell for three Honduran scholars going to the UK.



The British Ambassador to Honduras, Nick Whittingham, sent off successful Chevening Scholarship recipients at a virtual meeting hosted with the awardees and members of the Chevening community in the county.

Every year, a group of outstanding Honduran scholars are selected to study different fields at UK universities under the prestigious Chevening Scholarship, funded by the British Government.

The three 2020-2021 scholars are:

- Sonia Nohemy Medina Muñoz. MA in Interior Design, University of East London
- Allan Omar Hernández Cotto. MSc in Mechatronics, University of Glasgow

- Magdiel Francisco Aranda Linares. MSc in Programme and Project Management, University of Warwick

Chevening is the UK Government's global scholarship programme that offers future leaders the unique opportunity to study in the UK. These scholarships are awarded to outstanding professionals from all over the world to pursue a one-year master's degree in any subject at any UK university.

Applications for 2021/2022 Chevening Scholarships are open from 3 September 2020. Find more information here: [Chevening Honduras](#)

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## [Chancellor Outlines Winter Economy Plan for Wales](#)

- Rishi Sunak unveils the UK Government's plan to protect jobs and support businesses across Wales over the coming months
- Central to plan is a new Job Support Scheme and extension of Self Employment Income Support Scheme
- And over one million UK businesses will get flexibilities to help pay back loans

The Chancellor Rishi Sunak outlined additional UK Government support to provide certainty to businesses and workers impacted by coronavirus in Wales.

Delivering a speech in Parliament, the Chancellor announced a package of measures that will continue to protect jobs and help businesses through the uncertain months ahead as we continue to tackle the spread of the virus.

The package includes a new Job Support Scheme to protect millions of returning workers, extending the Self Employment Income Support Scheme and 15% VAT cut for the hospitality and tourism sectors, and help for businesses in repaying government-backed loans.

The announcement comes after additional measures to combat the spread of the virus were imposed across the UK.

### **The Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:**

I understand that the resurgence of the virus and the restrictions imposed as a result present a new challenge to businesses and workers which are already struggling.

That's why I have brought forward UK-wide measures to directly

support Welsh jobs and companies through this next phase of the crisis.

I was always clear that I wouldn't hesitate to act in a creative and effective way to protect the Welsh economy and these measures represent that commitment.

### **Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:**

The UK Government has directly supported more than 500,000 jobs in Wales during the coronavirus pandemic and our Winter Economic Plan sets out the next steps to tackle the ongoing and unprecedented economic impact of the virus.

The new Job Support Scheme, the extension of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme and the other measures announced by the Chancellor will help keep people in jobs, extend crucial support to businesses and give them the certainty they need.

The struggle against Covid-19 is the biggest crisis Wales and the UK has faced in decades but we will do everything we can to protect jobs and the economy while keeping people safe.

Since the beginning of the pandemic the UK Government has provided billions of pounds of support both to the devolved administration in Wales and directly to Welsh businesses and workers.

We have given the devolved administration an additional £4b to cope with the pressures of the pandemic and we have protected more than half a million jobs in Wales through our furlough scheme.

Our Self Employment Support Scheme also helped 110,000 self-employed people in Wales and more than 41,000 businesses benefitted from UK Government loan schemes.

The Chancellor also unveiled his Plan for Jobs in July which supported jobs across the UK by focussing on skills, young people and boosting the hospitality sector with a VAT cut and landmark Eat Out to Help Out scheme.

The UK Government has been consistently clear that it would keep its support under review to protect jobs and the economy, with today's action reflecting the evolving circumstances and uncertainty of the months ahead.

The package of measures, which applies to all regions and nations of the UK, includes:

#### **Support for workers**

A new Job Support Scheme will be introduced from 1 November to protect viable jobs in businesses who are facing lower demand over the winter months due to

coronavirus.

Under the scheme, which will run for six months and help keep employees attached to the workforce, the UK Government will contribute towards the wages of employees who are working fewer than normal hours due to decreased demand.

Employers will continue to pay the wages of staff for the hours they work – but for the hours not worked, the UK Government and the employer will each pay one third of their equivalent salary. This means employees who can only go back to work on shorter time will still be paid two thirds of the hours for those hours they can't work.

In order to support only viable jobs, employees must be working at least 33% of their usual hours. The level of grant will be calculated based on employee's usual salary, capped at £697.92 per month.

The Job Support Scheme will be open to businesses across the UK even if they have not previously used the furlough scheme, with further guidance being published in due course.

It is designed to sit alongside the Jobs Retention Bonus and could be worth over 60% of average wages of workers who have been furloughed – and are kept on till the start of February 2021. Businesses can benefit from both schemes in order to help protect jobs.

In addition, the UK Government is continuing its support for millions of self-employed individuals by extending the Self Employment Income Support Scheme Grant. An initial taxable grant will be provided to those who are currently eligible for SEISS and are continuing to actively trade but face reduced demand due to coronavirus. The initial lump sum will cover three months' worth of profits for the period from November to the end of January next year. This is worth 20% of average monthly profits, up to a total of £1,875.

An additional second grant, which may be adjusted to respond to changing circumstances, will be available for self-employed individuals to cover the period from February 2021 to the end of April – ensuring our support continues right through to next year.

This is in addition to the more than £13 billion of support already provided for over 2.6 million self-employed individuals through the first two stages of the Self Employment Income Support Scheme – one of the most generous in the world.

## **Tax cuts and deferrals**

As part of the package, the UK Government also announced it will extend the temporary 15% VAT cut for the tourism and hospitality sectors to the end of March next year. This will give businesses in the sector – which has been severely impacted by the pandemic – the confidence to maintain staff as they adapt to a new trading environment.

In addition, up to half a million business who deferred their VAT bills will be given more breathing space through the New Payment Scheme, which gives them the option to pay back in smaller instalments. Rather than paying a lump sum in full at the end March next year, they will be able to make 11 smaller interest-free payments during the 2021-22 financial year.

On top of this, around 11 million self-assessment taxpayers will be able to benefit from a separate additional 12-month extension from HMRC on the "Time to Pay" self-service facility, meaning payments deferred from July 2020, and those due in January 2021, will now not need to be paid until January 2022.

### **Businesses given flexibility to pay back loans.**

The burden will be lifted on more than a million businesses who took out a Bounce Back Loan through a new Pay as You Grow flexible repayment system. This will provide flexibility for firms repaying a Bounce Back Loan. This includes extending the length of the loan from six years to ten, which will cut monthly repayments by nearly half. Interest-only periods of up to six months and payment holidays will also be available to businesses. These measures will further protect jobs by helping businesses recover from the pandemic.

We also intend to give Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme lenders the ability to extend the length of loans from a maximum of six years to ten years if it will help businesses to repay the loan.

In addition, the Chancellor also announced he would be extending applications for the UK Government's coronavirus loan schemes that are helping over a million businesses until the end of November. As a result, more businesses will now be able to benefit from the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme, the Bounce Back Loan Scheme and the Future Fund. This change aligns all the end dates of these schemes, ensuring that there is further support in place for those firms who need it.

### **Responses from business groups**

#### **Dame Carolyn Fairbairn, CBI Director-General, said:**

These bold steps from the Treasury will save hundreds of thousands of viable jobs this winter. It is right to target help on jobs with a future, but can only be part-time while demand remains flat. This is how skills and jobs can be preserved to enable a fast recovery.

Wage support, tax deferrals and help for the self-employed will reduce the scarring effect of unnecessary job losses as the UK tackles the virus. Employers will apply the same spirit of creativity, seizing every opportunity to retrain and upskill their workers.

The Chancellor has listened to evidence from business and acted

decisively. It is this spirit of agility and collaboration that will help make 2021 a year of growth and renewal.

**Mike Cherry OBE, Federation of Small Businesses National Chair, said:**

The UK's small businesses are facing an incredibly difficult winter. Today's support package is the flipside of the coin to Tuesday's COVID-19 business restrictions.

It is a swift and significant intervention, extending emergency SME loans, creating new wage support for small employers and the self-employed, and providing cashflow help on VAT deferrals and new Time To Pay for any tax bills to HMRC.

We welcome that the Chancellor is ensuring that decisions to protect public health are informed by the need to protect the economy, people's jobs and prospects for young people in our schools and workplaces.

**BCC Director General Adam Marshall said:**

The measures announced by the Chancellor will give business and the economy an important shot in the arm. Chambers of Commerce have consistently called for a new generation of support to help preserve livelihoods and ease the cash pressures faced by firms as they head into a challenging and uncertain winter.

The Chancellor has responded to our concerns with substantial steps that will help companies preserve jobs and navigate through the coming months. The new wage support scheme will help many companies hold on to valued employees after furlough ends, and the extension of business lending schemes and tax forbearance will lessen the immediate pressure on cash flow for many affected firms.

As we look past the immediate challenge, more will need to be done to rebuild and renew our economy. Chambers of Commerce across the UK will continue to work with the UK Government to ensure the benefits of these schemes are delivered to firms on the ground.

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# Leeds Youth Justice Service lockdown challenge

## **Tell us about Leeds youth justice service**

Jenny Bright, Operational Manager at Leeds YJS said:

“Leeds YJS is a large city service that is made up of around forty youth justice staff, plus specialist. We ordinarily work with three-hundred children and young people at any time. Leeds is an excellent service to work for. New, creative initiatives are encouraged and supported and a child first approach is adopted and followed. This stood us in good stead for lockdown and the changes that took place!”

## **How have your practices changed and how has your work been impacted since the pandemic?**

Jenny added that:

“The pandemic has had a huge impact on how we work. We have worked very hard to ensure staff feel supported and safe, whilst still providing a good service to children, families, the courts and our other partners. Leeds City Council infrastructure has also been excellent to support remote working.”

Some of its new practices include:

### **Staff equipment & I.T.**

All staff have the equipment to work remotely from home and can access the necessary systems to continue to support children and families.

### **Communicating with children**

Smartphones were provided to all front-line staff and this allowed for creative ways of engaging children and families during the pandemic and ongoing. Some children have also preferred the phone as a means of communication. Staff continue to be based at home, however all of the children receive a minimum of one face-to-face contact per week, in addition to calls and digital communication. Leeds is a relationship based service and face-to-face work is integral to this. This was easier during the spring and summer months, where staff saw the children in gardens, parks and on walks. Staff continue to visit children whose behaviours were assessed as high risk of harm or who were very vulnerable throughout lockdown.

### **Laptops & learning**

Staff also identified those children who were digitally excluded and secured a laptop for all children who need them. Staff worked hard to try and ensure children are safe and still have the opportunity to learn. All children on education, health and care plans were identified in the initial period of

lockdown and support was provided to enable and encourage them to access education. As schools have returned, the YJS is ensuring staff know the education offer for all children and can support a plan if the child is on a part time timetable. The YJS has excellent links with its post-sixteen pathways workers who have been supporting children to access college places or to identify other routes.

### **Team check-ins**

All the YJS's teams have daily team check-ins first thing every morning. This has provided necessary communication, interaction, laughs and good ideas! Staff have really pulled together as teams.

### **Food parcels**

Initially, all of the YJS's offices closed with the exception of its central base. Within a few days of lockdown, a small team of staff used this base to organise food parcels for vulnerable families and this later expanded to cover vulnerable care leavers in the city.

### **Supporting local work around Leeds**

Leeds is a city that has excellent partnership working and at no time in its history was this needed more. Leeds YJS looked beyond its youth justice duties and allowed staff to support the work of its local secure children's home, to support its local youth service partners to engage children on the street and to support some of our minority communities with information and resources.

### **What do you think the biggest challenge is for the children you work with at the moment?**

Jenny said: "The biggest challenges for our children and young people are things that were there before the pandemic, however the pandemic has amplified them. Issues around poverty, for example, some families have literally had no food in the house when they called us, some families houses are freezing cold and some families have lost their income."

Other challenges the YJS is aware of include:

- limited educational and employment opportunities
- children's and/or their family's poor mental health
- the impact of trauma
- children missing connections with friends
- children who feel safer outside their home
- children feeling there is little hope for their future
- uncertainty
- not being able to access support in the same way, or at all

All of these things require a multi-agency effort to ensure our children are not left behind.

## **Tell us about your #LockDownChallenge initiative**

Nicola Lonsdale, Education Officer at Leeds YJS said:

“It started as a way of occupying the children and young people I was working with. I had limited time as a mum but knew I had lots of materials at home, so I gathered up wood or old paint and put together three #LockDownChallenge bags/boxes. “First was a young lad living with his mum and his previous charges were damage in the family home. He wanted to repair the damage and make it right, so I delivered him paint and wood and he managed to make an upcycled dresser. He went on to do the whole bedroom. His mother was so proud and it encouraged her to start an online doll making business. Weekly you could see and hear the positive changes in their relationship.

Before and after photographs of a dresser that has been ‘upcycled’ through the #LockDownChallenge

“Other projects include a baking challenge and bird box making. I dropped the bag on the doorstep of the child’s house and it would include all instructions and materials needed. I chatted to the child and family beforehand to check what else they needed.

“For one lad, I liaised with Children’s Social Work service who provided the family (a grandad who had care of his grandson) with the equipment to bake. The child’s grandad took part in the activity and took pictures, which was great as this lad was a high-risk case, so actually getting him to stay in and bake with his grandad was huge. Post lockdown, he’s still not in school, and while part of my work is to support his return to school, I’m also offering other activities. He’s back with mum but this week doing an AQA home cooking activity to gain entry level while we sort his education.

An example of baking ingredients supplied as a part of the challenge

“As a service we had already embarked on training to involve the AQA Unit Award Scheme in our work and my colleague, Amanda Hart, had started to develop this. I thought a great idea would be to attach a qualification to lockdown challenge so that the children get formally recognised and gain some self-worth skill during these strange times. With no school and possibly no services looking out for them, our children deserve all the time and effort we can give them. As a result of this, I spoke with my colleague and we decided to put together AQA awards for officers to offer to children and young people.”

**The AQA offers we provide to children are:**

Making a wooden box

- entry level
- learner style – hands on/practical

- curriculum link – maths/DT

Planning, preparing and baking a chocolate cake

- entry level
- learner style – creative/independent/hands on
- curriculum link – science/tech

Creating zendoodles

- level 1
- learner style – creative/hands on
- curriculum link – art/mindfulness/calm

Emotional wellbeing

- entry level
- learner style – 1:1, calm/stress free
- curriculum link – PSHE

Preparing simple meals

- entry
- learner style – creative
- curriculum link – science/food prep

For the entire month of August, officers in West Leeds had a challenge to offer out as many of the AQA challenge bags as they could, the target being 10. The challenge in August was a 'Rocky road make and compare challenge'. The YJS provided the checklist and all of the ingredients to the children.

September was a savoury dish challenge, using a cookbook for inspiration on using non-perishables. The YJS is currently planning October activity to be a creative one involving a charity.

Nicola sums up that:

"What started out as a way to engage children and their families at a difficult time, has turned into something I feel we can build upon and evolve as a service. There is no greater place for a child or young people than to be involved and included into a mainstream (or specialist) education package, that is both meaningful and purposeful. Our aim as Education Officers is to assist this process and make it our core business.

"In lockdown and as we move through these strange times, we have had to adapt. We have to ensure our children adapt. #LockdownChallenge was a way of initially connecting, making sure we kept children in the loop. I saw one of our high-risk children take part and some decide to go on and do their own projects beyond our contact.

"As we moved from full lockdown, the team embraced the AQA challenge, which is a useful tool to engage and give credit to someone's work who might have never achieved an AQA.

"I hope we can continue to develop packages like this and maybe link with education providers to enable a firm basis for our children in YJS who are in transition to a suitable education package."