
08 April 2020

Dr Ben Broadbent
Deputy Governor, Monetary Policy
Bank of England

Dear Deputy Governor,

We are currently facing a number of challenges from Covid-19, including the continuity of data collection for consumer prices. We have contingency plans in place to ensure that inflation indices can continue to be produced and we are now moving to implement them. These plans will be put in place for the April 2020 consumer price statistics published on 20 May.

As production of RPI is governed by section 21 of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, we are writing to you to ask you to undertake an assessment of these plans as set out in that Act. This letter therefore initiates the UK Statistics Authority's consultation with the Bank over whether the outlined collection changes for RPI would constitute a fundamental change in the index that would be materially detrimental to the interests of holders of relevant index-linked gilts.

To be clear, this request is not linked to the announcement on 4 September 2019. Rather the contingency plans are aimed solely at continuation of the publication of a regular RPI based on the current methods and data during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We have broken down our plans into two main areas: issues connected to the mode of local price collection and the methods for dealing with missing prices. This first letter covers the former issue and a subsequent letter will deal with the latter.

Details of our plans to maintain a local price collection are provided in the attachments to this letter. Please let me know if you have any queries or would like to discuss further.

A copy of this letter goes to colleagues at Bank of England, HM Treasury and Office for National Statistics.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Athow

Deputy National Statistician, Economic Statistics