



**BANK OF ENGLAND**

**Jonathan Athow**  
Deputy National Statistician  
Office for National Statistics  
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London  
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**Ben Broadbent**  
Deputy Governor Monetary Policy

23 July 2021

**By email only**

Dear Jonathan

**Bank of England's request for pre-release access to ONS statistics in 2021**

The Bank of England continues to welcome all steps taken to ensure the integrity of official economic statistics and fully supports the decision to end regular pre-release access to ONS data.

As we have previously discussed, Part 2 of the Pre-Release access to Official Data Order 2008 provides for the National Statistician to grant exceptional pre-release access to particular Bank staff where, in his or her judgement, it is required for the Bank to discharge its policy functions most effectively. We agree that such access should be as transparent as possible.

As I wrote in my letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020, the Bank intends to write to the ONS on an annual basis requesting whatever pre-release access might be necessary for the Bank to discharge its policy functions over the following year, in light of the ONS's data release timetable and our own schedule of meetings of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). This letter concerns the Bank's request for pre-release access to official statistics in 2021.

As you are aware, the data contained within the Consumer Price Inflation and Labour Market Statistics releases are central to the Bank's assessment of the current economic outlook and so the MPC's monetary policy decision.

Under the exceptional circumstances that these data are released in the same week that the MPC announces its policy decision, the Bank requests continued pre-release access for MPC members and a very small number of Bank staff (those present at the MPC meeting itself and some members of the Governor's Private Office) to the following:

The Consumer Price Index release that falls on the 15<sup>th</sup> December with pre-release access granted such that the data are available for the MPC's meeting at 1.30pm on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December.

The Labour Market Statistics release that falls on the 14<sup>th</sup> December with pre-release access granted such that the data are available for the MPC's meeting at 1.30pm on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December.

Please can we continue to receive these data 60 minutes before the start of the MPC meeting to ensure we have sufficient time to deal with any technical problems in processing the numbers that inevitably arise from time to time.

While fairly unlikely, it is possible that the timings of the MPC's meetings may need to be adjusted during the course of the year, for instance to accommodate senior Bank staff's attendance at international meetings. If that occurs in a way that affects our need for exceptional pre-release access in any way, we will of course let you know straightaway.

I am copying this letter to Alan Castle and Simon Kirby (Bank of England).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Broadbent', written in a cursive style.

Ben Broadbent  
Deputy Governor, Monetary Policy