



## Public Accounts Committee

**Dame Bernadette Kelly DCB**  
**Permanent Secretary**  
**Department for Transport**  
**Great Minister House**  
**33 Horseferry Road**  
**London SW1P 4DR**  
**By email:**  
[Permanent.Secretaries@dft.gov.uk](mailto:Permanent.Secretaries@dft.gov.uk)

**Julie Lennard**  
**Chief Executive**  
**DVLA**  
**Swansea**  
**SA7 0AN**

27 June 2023

### **Treasury Minute response – Investigation into the management of backlogs in driving licence applications**

Dear Dame Bernadette Kelly and Julie Lennard,

Thank you for your response to our report on the management of backlogs in driving licence applications. However, we found several aspects of your response unconvincing:

- **Recommendation 1:** We recommended that you should set up better systems to identify and fast-track driving licence applications where a customer is badly affected by a delay. Rather than explaining a strategy for improvement, your response has simply reiterated what tools are already in place.
- **Recommendation 2b:** We recommended that you should explain what you are doing to improve how you communicate with important stakeholders, such as MPs. Your response has not included any plans to improve this service.
- **Recommendation 5a:** We wanted to confirm whether you had achieved the target of resolving the backlog in medical driving licence applications within the expected timeframe. Your response states that the backlog has been resolved, but you have not supported this assertion with relevant data. The statistic you introduce - the number of decisions made within 20 working days - is not comparable with previous data you have provided and which are presented in the NAO's report.
- **Recommendation 6:** We recommended that by the end of 2023 you set out a strategy to further re-engineer and modernise the driving licence process over the next 3-5 years, with a focus on resilience and enabling more secure remote working. Your response, however, only refers to the current 3-year strategy for change, which runs to March 2024, and which gives no detail on your intentions beyond that date.

Please could you reconsider your responses to these four recommendations. I would be grateful if you could write back by 27 July.



## Public Accounts Committee

We also recommended that you should work with the Department of Health & Social Care, the NHS and other medical bodies to complete, by the end of 2024, a strategic review of the system for processing applications from individuals with a notifiable medical condition, setting out a timetable in the Treasury Minute. You disagreed with this recommendation on the basis that a strategic review would need to be decided by ministers. However, you have promised to write to us about this issue once ministers have considered proposals, which I hope implies you may yet implement our recommendation.

I am copying this letter to the Treasury Officer of Accounts and to the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Yours Sincerely

Dame Meg Hillier  
Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts