

From: Peter Moore
To: callforevidence
Subject: Access to cash review
Date: 18 August 2018 16:50:42

Hello,

I have read your Introduction, Call for Evidence and 'Questions', with interest and the many reasons why there is likely to be a continuing demand for cash use in the future are clearly set out.

There are a few comments I would like to make both as an individual and as the present chairman of my trade association. I should add that I personally use cash, cheques and credit/debit cards and access bank accounts online. My trade association (The Provincial Booksellers' Fairs Association) runs more than 60 events each year ranging from small local events to much larger fairs in Central London and, the largest, at York Racecourse with some 220 exhibitors, in September.

In recent months I have been keeping a record of the payment method used by my own customers at our events, the most recent at The Forum Norwich last weekend, at which I made 17 sales. Only one customer questioned whether he could pay by plastic. I stated that yes he could but I would have to switch my card reader, and mobile phone for the Bluetooth link, on. It would take a few minutes, as long as I can get a signal for the phone. He immediately paid cash which took just a few seconds. The 16 others all offered cash.

At similar events in recent months in Stamford, Lincoln, Northampton and elsewhere hardly any customers asked to pay by plastic, all bar two offered cash straightaway, and the two paid by cheque. There are two points about this, first that I wonder whether in the figures you quote for the percentage of transactions paid for by cash all the many thousands of transactions at fairs, markets and shows are included? And it is not just the transactions between members of the public and the stall holder, but transactions between stallholders, most easily made by cash. Second, I have felt for some time that many customers visit these events with the intention of spending only as much cash as they have with them. Once it is spent they go home. Whereas if they use plastic there is always the temptation to spend more and build up unwanted debts. Then there is the question of accessing a mobile phone signal at an event. At the events I have mentioned only at Norwich could I get a signal for my phone. At Stamford for example we had access to the local authority wi-fi but on logging on I received the message 'out of range' and this was in the centre of the town. Without a signal for the mobile phone card readers are of no use. There is an assumption on the part of 'the banks' that we can all use mobile phones everywhere both in conjunction with card readers and now in order to photograph cheques for 'electronic banking'. The fact is that we cannot. I mentioned the question of weak or non-existent mobile signal above. In my own village I cannot get a mobile signal anywhere in the village (and this just 4 miles from the centre of Cambridge of all places, on the A10, and half a mile from the M11), though there is a 'hot spot' at a supermarket two miles away.

Until there is 100% coverage and a strong signal for mobile phone use all over the UK to enable 'cashless' transactions which, it seems, the banks wish for, the continuing availability of cash is essential. Without it many normal activities, such as the fairs and markets I mention above, would be unable to function. And frankly cash is so easy and quick to use!

Regards,

Peter Moore

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PS. I know; my website is not up to date!



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