

## Written evidence submitted by Julia Lopez MP

Dear Dame Meg Hillier MP,

Thank you for the below invitation to respond to the Treasury Select Committee's inquiry into the acceptance of cash. I am very glad that the Committee is investigating this important issue, with real impacts upon communities up and down the country, including those in my constituency of Hornchurch & Upminster.

While I was unable to host a roundtable on this topic, I did conduct online resident surveys in the three main population centres of the constituency: Harold Hill, Hornchurch and Upminster, asking constituents for their views on the acceptance of cash.

Across the three polls we collected 1,711 votes from residents.

Each poll gave seven options for residents to vote on (as well as being able to add their own), with residents being able to vote more than once. They received the following number of votes:

- I want to carry on being able to use cash – 619 (36%)
- I don't mind not being able to use cash – 53 (3%)
- I often use cash – 191 (11%)
- I rarely use cash – 102 (6%)
- I dislike it when a business no longer accepts cash – 253 (15%)
- I don't mind it when a business no longer accepts cash – 29 (1.6%)
- I think a business should have to accept cash – 254 (15%)

As you will no doubt see, residents in my constituency overwhelmingly want to continue using cash in their day to day lives, with a tiny proportion of residents explaining that they don't mind not being able to use cash.

Whilst the number of people using cash regularly compared to those not using cash regularly is much closer, it's clear from the survey submissions from my residents that they prefer having the option to use cash.

I would also note the high number of residents who believe that businesses should have to accept cash, being the second most voted for option from the stock responses we supplied to residents.

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On a related note, whilst I understand that the issue sits outside of your inquiry, I am currently running a campaign to secure a banking hub in my constituency. During my campaign, my team and I have spoken to many businesses in Upminster who have shown their support for the campaign and spoke about the value of their customers having access to cash.

Similarly, in the above mentioned surveys, residents when given the chance to add their own options to the survey, many added an option to vote for getting a banking hub in their community. This highlights the importance of cash in our community, and a real demand from local people to continue having access to, and use of, cash.

I would be grateful if the committee would carefully consider this evidence as part of the inquiry.

With best wishes,

Julia Lopez.

*January 2025*