

Press release issued on behalf of BCR

31 January 2022

Banking Competition Remedies Ltd (BCR) publishes progress updates on Public Commitments from Pool E Capability and Innovation Fund recipients

The Board of Banking Competition Remedies Ltd (BCR) today publishes progress updates for Pool E recipients, providing a summary of performance against their public commitments to the period 30th November 2021.

The public commitment updates this reporting period has seen several launches of new solutions for UK SMEs. They also indicate funding is being swiftly deployed to create impact in the market through marketing campaigns and partnerships.

Awardees progress against public commitments made can be found [here](#). There have been no changes to business cases for Pool E awardees during this quarter, but it is anticipated that there will be a number during the next reporting period.

Aidene Walsh, CIF Executive Director, said: “BCR is pleased to see marketing campaigns and awardee partnerships with larger institutions enabling awardees to build traction in the market. Despite some awardees experiencing delays on the delivery of initiatives due to high levels of competition for talent and continued government lending intervention impacting targets, awardees remain strongly focused on robust delivery in creating competition for UK SMEs.”

A summary of performance against awardees public commitments can be found in the notes to editors, with links to the full updates provided above:

Pool E fifth quarter update

- *Virgin Money UK PLC public commitment progress update*
- *ClearBank Ltd public commitment progress update*
- *Ebury Partners Limited public commitment progress update*
- *MarketFinance Limited public commitment progress update*
- *Funding Xchange Ltd public commitment progress update*
- *Codat Limited public commitment progress update*
- *ezbob Ltd public commitment progress update*
- *Fractal Labs Ltd public commitment progress update*
- *Previsio Ltd public commitment progress update*

The next progress updates for Pool E awardees will be in April 2022. Pool A, B, C and D awardees will provide their next progress update in February 2022. Additionally, Pool F awardees will provide their first progress update in February 2022. For more details on how BCR monitors CIF awardees see [here](#).

Notes to editors:

A summary of CIF Pool E performance against public commitments

Pool E fifth quarter update

Virgin Money UK PLC public commitment progress update: Virgin Money delivered its new digital BCA (M-Account) and Working Capital Wellness Tracker (M-Track) in line with its commitments. A new marketing campaign was also launched during the quarter, and it has led to increased traffic to Virgin Money's website and increased brand awareness. Additionally, its digital onboarding, previously available to single director limited companies, has now been extended to sole traders and other more complex entity types.

ClearBank Ltd public commitment progress update: Having already achieved its committed additional market share of 1%, ClearBank launched the first iteration of Open-Access during Q4 2021, supporting its commitment to remove friction in SME banking. ClearBank achieved c.50% of its lending commitment ahead of time and is on track to deliver its remaining commitments.

Ebury Partners Limited public commitment progress update: In addition to its digital suite of products, Ebury delivered its self-serve functionality allowing customers to manage credit lines themselves. All deliverables have now been released in 2021 as planned. Its lending commitment of £42m was met by the end of 2021. Customer targets are progressing well and will be achieved by the end of 2022.

MarketFinance Limited public commitment progress update: MarketFinance continues to make good progress with its business case, particularly in launching its fourth solution (MarketPay) and its Single Interface (Unified Dashboard) whereby MarketFinance can now offer multiple cash flow solutions and tailor-made combinations to all its customers under a single user-friendly dashboard.

Funding Xchange Ltd public commitment progress update: Funding Xchange continued to expand its partnerships enabling expansion of its reach into the SME population. It has now onboarded an additional 25 funders to its marketplace, is on track to 'go-live' with a Tier 1 bank in Q1 2022. Its portfolio monitoring solution has been fully launched with promising feedback. Funding Xchange continue to be impacted by the current climate in relation to lending targets and are doing their best to mitigate this.

Codat Limited public commitment progress update: Codat is delivering strongly making improvements to the user experience of its self-serve platform and seeing increasing numbers signing up every month. Codat has met two out of five of its commitments and is on track to deliver the remaining three commitments.

ezbob Ltd public commitment progress update: ezbob launched its first Proof of Concept (PoC) and is in discussion with its second client. However, the challenging external environment continues to impact demand with the remaining 3 PoCs as well as lending targets at risk. ezbob has delivered all functionality build as planned.

Fractal Labs Ltd (trading as tomato pay) and untied public commitment progress update: tomato pay is on track to launch SMART proposition for general availability with Santander UK in Q2 2022. It has successfully launched its dynamic discounting feature, making it seamless for SMEs to incentivise prompt invoice payments to stabilise their cashflow. tomato pay developed tax in real time proof of concept, which won an award from UK Finance/ Open Banking World/ Ozone APIs, and it ran a successful pilot with Deloitte's charity arm- Five Million Futures. tomato pay continues to experience delays to its tax progress due to dependencies on HMRC.

Previs Ltd public commitment progress update: Previs is progressing well and has seen over 54,000 SMEs engaging with its Good Business Pays campaign (SmartData program with FSB). Additionally, it has advanced £8.7m to SMEs through its InstantFinance underwritten products and continues to enhance its products to further support its customers. Lending continues to be hampered by the current economic climate. Previs is committed to meeting its targets, including working on a more discrete channel approach to origination.

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About BCR

Banking Competition Remedies Ltd (BCR) is the independent body established to implement the £775 million Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) State Aid Alternative Remedies Package (ARP). BCR is independent from RBS and the UK Government. It is governed by an independent board of directors. The purpose of BCR is to implement the ARP such that the UK's State Aid commitments are met, coupled with an ambition that seeks to increase and expand competition among providers of financial services to SMEs.

The ARP was negotiated and agreed between HM Government and the European Commission and comprises two RBS funded measures amounting to £775m:

- The Incentivised Switching Scheme – which has now closed has distributed all £251m funds.
- The Capability and Innovation Fund – to which £425 million has been allocated to support the development of wider capabilities and competition in the SME banking market essentially through grants to eligible challenger institutions. BCR holds awardees to account by closely monitoring their progress against business plans. With Pool F awards announced, there are now 22 awardees across 6 pools.

The Capability and Innovation Fund is designed to promote capabilities and competition in the market for banking services to SMEs in the United Kingdom. Further details on the Capability and Innovation Fund can be found [here](#).