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PRESS RELEASE

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Simplified access to the UK's payments systems takes another step forward with the publication of a new, cross-scheme guide to participation

The UK's interbank Payments System Operators (PSOs) – Bacs Payment Schemes Limited (Bacs), CHAPS, Cheque and Credit Clearing Company, Faster Payments and LINK – have today published a new guide entitled, *An Introduction to the UK's Interbank Payment Schemes*.

Available on each of the PSOs' websites, the guide is intended for use by payments service providers (PSPs) that are considering joining, or thinking of extending more payments services to their customers.

The document provides an overview of the UK's payment schemes, what each one offers, and how they can be accessed by PSPs. It has been developed collaboratively by the schemes, capturing input from the Payments Strategy Forum, a number of challenger banks and FinTechs.

This is another important step forward in the journey to open up the UK's payments systems. This year has already seen broadening access to the schemes, with Raphaels and Metro Bank joining Faster Payments, and Societe Generale and Northern Trust joining CHAPS. In 2017, the interbank schemes are expecting growth in direct participation to continue to accelerate.

Hannah Nixon, Managing Director of the Payment Systems Regulator, said:

“Simple, clear and fair requirements will help make it easier to gain access to the UK's Interbank Payment Systems. As the economic regulator for the £75 trillion UK payment systems industry, we welcome the work that has been undertaken to produce this guide – which should help introduce organisations to the different access options available to them in each of the payment systems.”

“The guide also demonstrates progress by the PSOs in taking forward some of the work recommended by the Payments Strategy Forum. It is an encouraging first step in moving towards common terms across the different payment schemes and we look forward to the PSOs continuing to build on this during 2017.”

Simon Kirby, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, added:

“Payment systems are the plumbing of the financial system – for these to work as effectively as possible, a wide variety of firms should be able to have access. That is one of the reasons we set up the Payment Systems Regulator in 2015, with its job to drive competition and help boost innovation.

“I welcome this guide and the progress that is being made to ensure that the payment systems work for the UK’s businesses and consumers.”

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For further information, please contact the following press offices:

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- Faster Payments - press@fasterpayments.org.uk or 020 3217 8368
- LINK - press@ukpayments.org.uk or 020 3217 8168

About Bacs

Bacs has been maintaining the integrity of payment related services since 1968, with responsibility for the schemes behind the clearing and settlement of UK automated payment methods, Direct Debit and Bacs Direct Credit, as well as the provision of managed services for third parties, such as the Cash ISA Transfer Service, and the development, management and subsequent ownership of the Current Account Switch Service.

More than 110 billion transactions have been debited or credited to British bank accounts via Bacs since its inception; in 2015, 6 billion UK payments were made this way, while a new record was also set in September 2016 with the number of transactions processed by Bacs in a single day reaching a high of 109.3million.

A not-for-profit entity which has maintained carbon neutral status since 2012, Bacs is a membership company limited by Guarantee.

www.bacs.co.uk

About CHAPS

CHAPS is the UK electronic payment system that guarantees same day settlement finality for high-value payments. It is at the heart of the UK’s payments and financial infrastructure. CHAPS settles daily average values in the region of £277 billion (with an average payment value of £2 million) from its 24 Direct Participants who, in turn, serve several thousand other financial institutions on an indirect basis (as Indirect Participants).

www.chapsco.co.uk

About the Cheque and Credit Clearing Company

The Cheque and Credit Clearing Company (C&CCC) is a non-profit making industry body, which has managed the cheque clearing system in England and Wales since 1985, and in all of Great Britain since 1996 when it took over responsibility for managing the Scottish cheque clearing. As well as clearing cheques, the system processes bankers' drafts, building society cheques, postal orders, warrants, government payable orders and travellers' cheques. The company also manages the systems for the clearing of paper bank giro credits (the credit clearing), euro cheques (the euro clearing) and US dollar cheques (the currency clearing for US dollar cheques drawn on London banks). To ensure the long-term future of cheques for consumers and businesses the Cheque and Credit Clearing Company is currently looking to improve the cheque clearing process by introducing cheque imaging.

www.chequeandcredit.co.uk

About Faster Payments

Faster Payments is the only UK payment system available day and night, 365 days per year, supporting the demands of personal and business customers. In 2015, Faster Payments processed 1.24 billion payment transactions with a value of £1,104 billion.

The Faster Payments Scheme has 12 direct settling participants: Barclays, Citi, Co-operative Bank, Clydesdale and Yorkshire Banks, HSBC (including first direct and M&S Bank), Lloyds Banking Group (including Lloyds Bank, Halifax and Bank of Scotland), Nationwide Building Society, Metro Bank, Northern Bank (Danske Bank), Raphaels Bank, Royal Bank of Scotland Group (including NatWest and Ulster Bank) and Santander UK. PayPal connect to Faster Payments on a direct agency basis, whilst a further 400 PSPs access the service indirectly through a sponsor bank.

Faster Payments Scheme Limited (FPSL) is an independent limited by guarantee company established in 2011. The Scheme exists to develop, operate and enhance payment services based upon a shared 24/7 real-time infrastructure. FPSL is driven by the long-term needs and aspirations of customers, businesses, government, the third sector and all types of PSPs including challengers and incumbents. The Scheme operates on a fair and equitable cost recovery basis. It does not seek to make a financial return for its guarantors.

www.fasterpayments.org.uk

About the LINK Scheme

The LINK Scheme is the national ATM network that connects virtually all the UK's ATMs. LINK's role is to provide UK consumers with universal access to cash in a safe, convenient and rapid manner. LINK is governed by the 39 industry organisations that issue ATM cards and deploy ATMs in the UK.

www.link.co.uk