



The Lady Chief Justice
of England & Wales

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE BARONESS CARR OF WALTON-ON-THE-HILL

By email to: Helen Taylor

27th March 2024

Dear Courts and Tribunals Observers Network,

HMCTS guidance on public access to courts

Thank you for your letter dated 13th February 2024 where you expressed concerns about the adequacy of a guidance document on public access to the courts (The Guide).

The Guide is not a judicial publication, but rather one produced by HMCTS. It is not a substitute for judicial decision-making, nor for the many rules that govern the facilitation of open justice, by which court and tribunal officials are also bound.

On the specific issue of laptops and other devices being taken into the criminal courts, HMCTS clearly made an error. I understand that HMCTS has acknowledged its mistake, and taken steps to make the necessary correction.

I of course remain committed to transparency and open justice in the courts and tribunals. I am copying this reply to the Lord Chancellor and Chair of the Justice Select Committee to whom you have also written.

Yours sincerely,

THE RT HON THE BARONESS CARR OF WALTON-ON-THE-HILL