

# Test and Trace boss 'must consider her positions' amid system failures



**GMB union has called for the immediate resignation of Baroness Dido Harding, executive chair of the Test and Trace scheme.**

Test and Trace boss Dido Harding should immediately consider her positions, health and social care workers union GMB said today.



Baroness Harding was made **chair of the Test and Trace scheme** back in May and was controversially also appointed as interim chair of Health Protection England in August.

However, it became clear this week that the scheme had **failed to report an extraordinary 16,000 Covid-19 cases** which has subsequently led to massive delays in the efforts to trace contacts for the people who tested positive for the virus.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson told Parliament yesterday (7th October) the test and trace system is still “chasing the contacts” of 16,000 coronavirus cases.



And this week's 68.8% figure for close contacts reached (and told to self-isolate) looks like the **lowest number since test and trace started**.

Then on Monday the **Baroness voted against an amendment to the Immigration Bill** after previously agreeing to avoid 'sensitive' votes on health and social care issues due to her role as a public office holder.

The amendment, to require a review of the implications that the Government's immigration plans would have on social care staffing was successful, despite Dido Harding's attempt to thwart it.

As a public office holder, the Baroness should be bound by the civil service code, which states that civil servants should not “act in a way determined by political considerations”.

GMB believes the Test and Trace system should be in public hands and that oversight of public health should be led by public health experts and local authorities.





**Rehana Azam, GMB National Secretary said:**

“The Prime Minister said he couldn’t think of anyone better than Baroness Harding to run the UK’s Test and Trace programme, and that shows a clear lack of judgement. It’s scary that one of the Prime Minister’s cronies with a terrible track record has been put in temporary custody of our country’s public health.

“We’ve seen blunder after blunder under her leadership of Test and Trace and now the Baroness has further shown herself as a flunky for the Tory Party voting against efforts in the House of Lords to ensure the social care workforce are considered when the Government brings in its immigration policies.

“This is not the independent public health expert the country and its staff need leading the scheme.

“There is now ample proof to show that the UK’s Test and Trace programme needs to be taken into public hands and led by experts and local authorities, not party-political cronies.

“It’s time for Dido Harding to consider her positions”.

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