

Coronavirus Business Advice and Support Update – Monday 4 May 2020

The information in this newsletter is correct as of Monday 4 May 2020 but the situation is fastmoving so we suggest monitoring the key webpages outlined below as well as the [Council's website](#) for any changes in advice and support.

Sources of information and support for businesses

- The Government's '[support finder](#)' tool helps businesses and self-employed people to quickly and easily determine what financial support is available to them during the coronavirus pandemic.
- The [Government Business Support Hub](#) brings together up-to-date information, advice and guidance published by Government, including for sole traders and the self-employed as well as businesses in general.
- You can speak directly to an advisor on the Government's Business Support Helpline: [0300 456 3565](#).
- You can also speak to advisors on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Growth Hub's new Coronavirus business helpline: [01480 277923](#).

Contents

In this newsletter you can find information about:

1. Financial updates.....	2
2. Support for businesses during Coronavirus.....	4
3. Changing direction and finding a new job.....	7
5. Changes to Government guidance and legislation	7
6. Feed your experience back to Government.....	8

1. Financial updates

Bounce Back Loans now available

The [Bounce Back Loan scheme](#) will help small and medium-sized businesses to borrow between £2,000 and £50,000. The government will guarantee 100% of the loan and there won't be any fees or interest to pay for the first 12 months.

Loan terms will be up to 6 years. No repayments will be due during the first 12 months. The government will work with lenders to agree a low rate of interest for the remaining period of the loan.

The scheme will be delivered through a network of accredited lenders. If you've already received a loan of up to £50,000 under CBILS and would like to transfer it into the Bounce Back Loan scheme, you can arrange this with your lender until 4 November 2020.

The full rules of the scheme and guidance on how to apply is available on the [British Business Bank website](#).

Additional business grants for small businesses

The Government has recently announced a new [discretionary fund](#) is being set up for certain small businesses in England previously outside the scope of the business grant funds scheme (see Business Grants section below). This additional fund is aimed at small businesses with ongoing fixed property-related costs.

Councils are being asked to prioritise businesses in shared spaces, regular market traders, small charity properties that would meet the criteria for Small Business Rates Relief, and bed and breakfasts that pay council tax rather than business rates. Businesses must be small, under 50 employees, and they must also be able to demonstrate that they have seen a significant drop of income due to Coronavirus restriction measures.

Further guidance on the new Fund, including the level of funding for each area, is awaited from Government. We will provide updates on eligibility and the process for distributing the grants via this newsletter and on our website.

Self-Employment Income Support Scheme

This week HMRC will start contacting people who may be eligible for the new Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.

If they are eligible, this scheme will allow them to claim a taxable grant worth 80% of their trading profits up to a maximum of £7,500.

Under the rules of the scheme, not every self-employed person will be able to claim. You can review HMRC's [updated guidance](#) for information on eligibility, how to make a claim and how HMRC calculate the grants. In order to receive quick confirmation from the eligibility checker, you should:

- have your Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR) and your National Insurance Number to hand
- make sure your details are up-to-date in their Government Gateway account

The claims service will open on 13 May.

Funding from the British Film Institute (BFI)

Through their new [COVID-19 Production Continuation Fund](#) the BFI have made up to £2m available to independent British productions interrupted by COVID-19. The Fund is open for applications for a period of 4 weeks from 29 April 2020.

BFI Film Audience Network (FAN Network) includes cinemas, festivals, multi-arts venues, community cinemas and film archives, The [BFI FAN Covid-19 Resilience Fund](#) can provide financial assistance to FAN members. **The deadline for applications to the Fund is 6pm on Wednesday 6 May 2020.**

You can find the full list of the BFI's open funding programmes on their [website](#).

The Dancers' Hardship Fund

The Professional Dancer's Fund is providing [support to freelance dancers](#) across genres including ballet, contemporary, Black and Asian dance and hip hop including those with portfolio careers, e.g. choreography, who whose work would normally include employment in the subsidised dance sector. This Fund is supported by Arts Council England. Application round dates are from 30 April 2020 to 11 May 2020.

Funding for Charities

The NCVO have prepared a [valuable guide](#) to what charities and voluntary organisations need to do to prepare for the potential impacts of coronavirus on their operations and finances. This includes a [comprehensive list](#) of the funding support that is currently available from a wide range of organisations, from organisations that support people who are homeless or suffering from domestic violence, to those providing a community response to Coronavirus, to animal sanctuaries.

PPE VAT free for three months

From 1 May 2020, PPE purchased by care homes, businesses, charities and individuals to protect against COVID-19 is [free from VAT](#) for a three-month period.

Business Grants

As part of the Government's two grant funding schemes for small businesses, *the Small Business Grant Fund* and *the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund*, we have already successfully paid grants to over 80% of eligible businesses in the district.

[Grants for small businesses](#) that already pay little or no business rates because of small business rate relief (SBBR), rural rate relief (RRR) and tapered relief will provide a one-off grant of £10,000 to eligible businesses to help meet their ongoing business costs.

[Grant funding](#) of up to £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses:

- businesses in these sectors with a rateable value of under £15,000 will receive a grant of £10,000
- businesses in these sectors with a rateable value of between £15,001 and £51,000 will receive a grant of £25,000.

We have previously sent emails and letters inviting eligible businesses to apply for the grants using our online form: www.scambsgov.uk/governmentbusinessgrants. We have also called all of those eligible businesses that have not yet claimed their grant. This process is continuing with Councillors and officers working to ensure funding gets to where it's needed as quickly as possible.

If, having looked at the Government's guidance, you think you might be eligible for one of these grants please contact our team as soon as possible so that we can help you access the funding you are entitled to. Email businessgrants@scambsgov.uk.

Guidance for businesses setting out details of the Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF) and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF) has been [updated](#) with information about tax.

Business rates holidays

For all retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England

The Council has now identified and re-billed business accounts eligible for this relief. If you haven't received a £0.00 balance bill, but think you should qualify for the relief, please email NDR@scambsgov.uk and we will look into your situation individually. Please use "Expanded Retail Claim" in the subject of your email. The full criteria for this relief can be found on [our website](#) by clicking on the 'Internal Policies/Guidance' link.

For children's nurseries

We have now applied [business rates holiday for nurseries](#) to all eligible premises. Properties that benefit from the relief are those occupied by providers on Ofsted's Early Years Register and wholly or mainly used for the provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

2. Support for businesses during Coronavirus

Expansion of testing for essential workers who have symptoms

The Government has made further additions have to the list of essential workers who can be [tested for Covid-19](#). This now includes:

- all essential workers including NHS and social care workers with symptoms
- anyone over 65 with symptoms

- **anyone with symptoms whose work cannot be done from home (for example, construction workers, shop workers, emergency plumbers and delivery drivers)**
- anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus and lives with any of those identified above

Additionally, they are testing:

- social care workers and residents in care homes (with or without symptoms) both to investigate outbreaks and, following successful pilots, as part of a rolling programme to test all care homes
- NHS workers and patients without symptoms, in line with NHS England guidance

Booking the test has been made simpler via a new online system. Employers can [register and refer self-isolating staff](#), and employees can [book a test directly for themselves or members of their household](#) who are experiencing symptoms – a high temperature or new continuous cough.

Mentoring support during the Coronavirus Crisis

The Be the Business Rapid Response Programme is a 12-week programme, created specifically to help SMEs through this difficult period of uncertainty and change.

The focus of the support is intended to be around business continuity, pivoting of the business plan, advice on next steps and how to rebuild. The mentors are leaders from top firms such as BAE Systems, Amazon and Accenture

Mentoring will take place via video conferencing and phone calls only, and the structure encourages frequent, short conversations across three months with the allocated mentor.

The eligibility criteria for the programme are as follows:

- Minimum of £1 million turnover and 6 FTE staff
- Key decision maker in business
- Any sector

Please be aware that the mentor is not responsible for providing legal or financial advice in a professional advisory capacity.

Be the Business continue to provide their 12 month Mentoring for Growth programme (outlined in our earlier newsletter) for slightly larger businesses with a minimum £2 million turnover and 10 FTE staff. Any of these businesses could transition from the Rapid Response programme straight onto the Mentoring for Growth programme for 15 months' senior level mentoring at zero financial cost.

If you are interested in taking up this opportunity email: iain.crighton@growthco.uk.

New measures to protect businesses from aggressive rent collection and closure

The Government has announced that new [temporary measures](#) are being introduced to safeguard High Street shops and other companies against aggressive debt recovery actions during the coronavirus pandemic. Statutory demands and winding up petitions issued to

commercial tenants will be temporarily voided and changes will be made to the use of Commercial Rent Arrears Recovery, building on measures already introduced in the Coronavirus Act.

The Government has launched a new free online learning platform to boost workplace skills

[‘The Skills Toolkit’](#) online platform will help people to build their skills during the coronavirus outbreak and beyond.

It offers an opportunity to learn new skills to help to get ahead online and gain the knowledge we’ll all need for the future. The platform also offers employees who have been furloughed an opportunity to keep up their skills development while they are at home.

The free courses on offer cover a range of levels, from everyday maths and tools for using email and social media more effectively at work to more advanced training.

For example, individuals will be able to access courses helping them to create great online content developed by the University of Leeds and the Institute of Coding, to understand the Fundamentals of Digital Marketing from Google Digital Garage and to learn how to code for data analysis from the Open University.

All courses are online and flexible, so people can work through them at their own pace.

Support and guidance for making and delivering food

South Cambridgeshire District Council has recently published [support and advice](#) especially for local food companies. Sources of guidance are highlighted and food related Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are answered specifically around making and delivering food.

If you are thinking of starting up a delivery service or changing the ingredients of your products due to supply chain difficulties you can find answers to questions like 'Can I start a delivery service if I've not done it before?' and 'What happens if I can't get the normal supply? Will I have to change all my packaging to remove the claim?'.

Supporting your employees during coronavirus: domestic abuse

The order to stay at home can cause anxiety for those who are experiencing or feel at risk of domestic abuse. As an employer, you can play an important role in reassuring staff that they can still leave their home if they are experiencing domestic abuse and that there is still support available, including online support, helplines, refuges and the police. We encourage you to share this important message with staff using the information provided in the [Home Office’s employer pack](#).

Government webinars

Government departments are hosting a [series of free webinars](#) this week to help businesses understand the support available including:

Wednesday 6 May - [COVID-19: Impacts and changes to International Trade](#)

Thursday 7 May - [Managing your business during coronavirus: reporting, regulations and tax](#)

Multiple dates - [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – How to make a claim](#)

Multiple dates - [Coronavirus COVID-19 Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme](#)

3. Changing direction and finding a new job

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs has [published guidance](#) for workers on the type of seasonal work available, who can apply and where to find it. It includes link to websites where you can find out about current opportunities:

- [Find a job](#) – use the search terms ‘fruit picking’ ‘vegetable picking’
- [Pick for Britain](#) – which itself provides links to a range of agencies that recruit for the UK’s fruit and veg farms.

4. Changes to Government guidance and legislation

How to work safely in domiciliary care

[New guidance](#) has been published for those working in domiciliary care providing information on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Reuse of medicines in a care home or hospice

The Department for Health and Social Care, alongside NHS England and NHS Improvement, recently published a [standard operating procedure](#) on how to run a safe and effective medicines reuse scheme in a care home or hospice in England during the coronavirus outbreak.

Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can’t do

[Frequently asked questions](#) on what you can and can’t do during the coronavirus outbreak have been updated to reflect updated regulations and the latest PHE guidance.

Closing certain businesses and venues in England

[Guidance](#) on the closure of certain businesses and venues as part of further social distancing measures has been updated to further clarify the requirements of The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

Furloughed workers to receive full parental leave entitlement

Furloughed workers planning to take paid parental or adoption leave will be [entitled to pay based on their usual earnings](#) rather than a furloughed pay rate.

Personal protective equipment (PPE): export control process

[Information](#) for economic operators who will temporarily need a licence to export PPE outside the EU, EFTA member states and certain other territories has been updated to reflect the revised EU regulations.

Destroying spoilt beer, cider, wine or made-wine during coronavirus

Find out about [amended temporary changes](#) to the destruction of spoilt beer, cider, wine or made-wine if you're a brewer, cider producer, wine maker or publican. This includes advice to cider producers and wine and made-wine makers in addition to brewers and publicans.

Extra month to claim for farm payments

Farmers and land managers now have until 15 June to [apply for BPS payments](#) and to claim funding for their environmental and woodland work under other schemes.

Fraud and Cyber Crime

Measures announced over recent weeks to deal with coronavirus have seen our day-to-day life drastically changed – we are spending more time at home and online. Unfortunately, criminals will use every opportunity they can to scam innocent people and their businesses. [Advice and guidance](#) on how to protect yourself and your business from fraud and cyber-crime has been updated.

5. Feed your experience back to Government

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority is capturing the health of local business and the impact Coronavirus is having across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It will use this data to send back to Government and it will use the intelligence gathered to develop targeted support, information, advice and guidance. You can [fill out a survey](#) to let them know how Coronavirus is impacting your business.

The Department for Business, Enterprise, Innovation and Skills also welcomes information from businesses on the impacts of Coronavirus across supply, demand and labour markets, actions to address these impacts, and any gaps in the Government response from your perspective. Please send your intelligence to intel@beis.gov.uk. Please do copy Openforbusiness@scambs.gov.uk into your email as we are keen to understand the impacts of the crisis on the district's businesses.