

Coronavirus Business Advice and Support Update – Friday 19 June 2020

The information in this newsletter is correct as of Friday 19 June 2020 but we suggest monitoring the key webpages outlined below as well as the [Council's website](#) for the latest updates.

Black Lives Matter: Improving equality in the workplace

“The evidence demonstrates that inclusive organisations, which attract and develop individuals from the widest pool of talent, consistently perform better. That is the business case. But I believe the moral case is just as, if not more, compelling. We should live in a country where every person, regardless of their ethnicity or background, is able to fulfil their potential at work. Sadly, we are still a long way from this.” Baroness McGregor-Smith CBE, from [Race in the workplace - The McGregor-Smith Review](#).

To make a positive commitment to ensure that your business supports the black community, you could consider how your business could implement Business in the Community's (BiTC) [three key actions](#) leaders can take today to amplify their commitment to improving equality of opportunity in the workplace.

- Sign the Race at Work Charter
- Capture and publish Ethnicity Pay Gap Data
- Take the Race at Work Survey

Sources of information and support for businesses

The Government's [Business Support Helpline](#) number is FREEPHONE 0800 998 1098. The helpline provides free, impartial business support and signposting services to businesses in England – which currently includes business advice on Covid-19.

You can also find free support, advice and sources of finance through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough [Growth Hub](#) or [speak to an advisor](#) on webchat about support for your business.

Contents

In this newsletter you can find information about:

1. Grants, funding and finance.....	2
2. Support for businesses	4
3. Changing direction and finding a new job	6
4. Opportunities to help.....	6
5. Keeping your workplace safe.....	6
6. Importing and exporting goods in 2021	8

1. Grants, funding and finance

Discretionary Grants Scheme closes on 22 June

There is now just over three days left to apply to South Cambridgeshire District Council's Discretionary Grants Scheme.

Eligible organisations such as charities, market traders, B&Bs; those in shared offices or flexible workspaces; and those businesses that form part of the supply chain for the retail, hospitality and leisure industry are invited to apply as soon as possible, and no later than midnight on Monday 22 June.

The one-off payments under the scheme range from £2,500 for small firms to £10,000 for charities and other businesses connected to the retail, hospitality and leisure industry.

Please go to [our website](#) for information on the eligibility criteria for the grants. If you do apply, please ensure that you submit all of the documentation required to support your application.

Funding for museums, galleries and cultural organisations

£1.5m is available this year from The Art Fund's [Respond and Reimagine Grants](#). These new grants aim to help museums, galleries and cultural organisations respond to immediate challenges connected to the Covid-19 crisis, and offer support to adapt and reimagine ways of working for the future.

The Art Fund are happy to receive applications from UK public museums, galleries, historic houses, libraries and archives that:

- ordinarily have spaces for the public to visit and experience the visual arts or other object-based collections. This could include natural history, maritime and transport, archaeology and social history.

- can demonstrate that you usually operate to best practice standards or have a good track record in delivering high quality public activity.

If you are an organisation that is a visual arts agency or festival, they'd be happy to hear from you providing you can meet the above criteria and have a strong visual arts focus. They cannot support theatre, music, dance or other art forms.

Deadlines for applications are as follows:
Round 1: Apply by Monday 6 July 2020
Round 2: Apply by Monday 17 August 2020
Round 3: Apply by Monday 12 October 2020

Emerging Futures Fund

The [National Lottery Emerging Futures Fund](#) is available to voluntary and community organisations, charities and social enterprises.

Its goal is to help communities shape the future. Funding will be provided to organisations to explore questions, use stories and create narratives about what communities have learned in how they've responded to the challenges of COVID-19, and reflect on what else communities might want for the future. For example, this could be about looking at new ways of working or kinds of relationships that communities have set up through their crisis response.

Funding of £20,000 to £50,000 is available per project. The application deadline is Thursday 25 June at 5pm.

Reservists returning to civilian work eligible for government support schemes

The Government has [announced](#) that servicemen and servicewomen who come back to their day job after completing a period of active duty will be able to be furloughed by their employer under the recently extended Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS).

It was also announced that reservists who currently cannot access the SEISS as a direct result of their service in 2018-19 will be able to make a claim for both the first and second SEISS grants.

How different circumstances affect the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme

The guidance on the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme has been [updated](#) including examples to show when the 'adversely affected' criteria for the first and second grants will be met.

Extension of eviction protection

The Government has [extended measures](#) to prevent struggling companies from eviction until the end of September. A new [code of practice](#) has also been developed with leaders from the retail, hospitality and property sectors to provide clarity for businesses when discussing rental payments and to encourage best practice so that all parties are supported.

The code is voluntary for businesses and is relevant to all commercial leases held by businesses in any sector which have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. It encourages tenants to continue to pay their rent in full if they are in a position to do so and advises that others should pay what they can, whilst acknowledging that landlords should provide support to businesses if they too are able to do so.

VAT deferral period ending

HMRC's VAT payment deferral period [ends on 30 June 2020](#). If you have chosen to defer your VAT, this means you will need to:

- set-up cancelled direct debits in enough time for HMRC to take payment
- submit VAT returns as normal, and on time
- pay the VAT in full on payments due after 30 June

Any VAT payments you have deferred between 20 March and 30 June should be paid in full on or before 31 March 2021. You can make additional payments with subsequent returns.

You can contact HMRC:

- if you are unable to pay the VAT due and may need [time to pay](#) as soon as possible and before the payment is due
- for advice and information on [other support](#) available

2. Support for businesses

Covid-19 Business Reopening

With some non-essential businesses reopening this week for the first time in three months, South Cambridgeshire District Council is urging all customer-facing SMEs to complete a short survey to share experiences and concerns about reopening – which the Council will use to inform the support it offers businesses over the coming months.

The [survey can be completed online](#) and only takes around five minutes to complete.

Questions include what operational changes businesses have already made and what they may be planning to make. SMEs are also asked to share whether they have any wider concerns about reopening to do with signage and crowd control etc., and how the Council could provide additional support.

The Council is currently recruiting business advisors who will visit customer-facing businesses in the district to provide one-to-one support, drawing on £140,000 made available to support the reopening of high streets from the European Regional Development Fund.

In the meantime we have also established a new dedicated '[Reopening businesses](#)' webpage which provides to help business with practical advice regarding the reopening of a

business which had previously been required to close during the Coronavirus emergency period. The page covers:

- Cleaning and disinfection (non-healthcare settings)
- Coronavirus checklists
- Personal hygiene
- Re-opening checks
- Signage
- Social distancing
- Staff illness
- Waste

New AA accreditation scheme for the hospitality sector

We've come across the AA's new free [COVID Confident](#) assessment scheme which aims to support the hospitality industry in re-establishing and rebuilding consumer confidence as parts of the UK come out of lockdown. The Council is not involved with the scheme, and there may be others available, but we thought this might be a useful starting point for hospitality businesses looking to reopen.

The scheme is open to all hotels; B&Bs, guest accommodation, restaurants with rooms and pubs with rooms; self-catering properties; camping, glamping and holiday parks; hostels; serviced apartments; visitor attractions; restaurants; pubs; and golf courses.

The scheme is open to all hospitality establishments that pass the AA's "stringent criteria". The Covid Confident accreditation provided by the scheme will indicate to customers that the AA considers an establishment to have in place the necessary risk assessment, safety measures and staff training to reopen safely, in line with the UK's respective government guidelines as well as UKHospitality and respective trade association guidelines, as they are published.

Free digital advice

[Digital Boost](#) provides free digital advice for small businesses and charities impacted by coronavirus, provided by expert volunteers. Organisations in need are matched with digital experts to offer one to one conversations and practical webinars for free. The experts include volunteers from top organisations such as BCG Digital Ventures, Google, Oxford University, McCann and Global Tech Advocates, all ready to mentor small businesses and charities. Topics they can help with include:

- Online marketing: social media, search engine optimisation, sales and marketing
- Design and brand: e-commerce websites, branding and logos, user research
- And more: remote working, content strategy

Digital Boost is a partnership between [BCG Digital Ventures](#) and [Founders4Schools](#) and its supporters include the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

3. Changing direction and finding a new job

Free online courses to kickstart new skills and career opportunities

[UK Learns](#) provides a selection of online courses to help the UK workforce learn new skills and earn qualifications or accreditations that could open up better job and career opportunities. The courses are all designed to support workers who find themselves either furloughed or out of work owing to COVID-19.

The majority of courses available will require fewer than 20 hours of learning and cover the full spectrum of industry sectors. Most are self-study or scheduled study with a tutor, which then result in an accreditation valued by employers. Options include everything from courses in data science or programming, to entrepreneurship and softer skills such as building resilience, digital literacy and communications skills.

4. Opportunities to help

Help residents get online

Following a grant from Cambridge City Council, Cambridge Online is [appealing for donations](#) of old and new laptops, tablets and internet connectivity devices (such as dongles and sims) so it can provide households lacking regular access to the internet, with the equipment they need to get online. All new and refurbished devices will be distributed to households currently without internet access.

To donate a laptop, tablet or connectivity devices including dongles, sims or other equipment to Cambridge Online, please email help@cambridgeonline.org.uk or phone 01223 300407. Donated computer equipment can now also be dropped off by arrangement at The Guildhall in Market Square, from Monday to Friday between 10am and 2pm. People wishing to do this should phone 01223 457381 in advance to arrange for a council member or staff to meet them there. It is hoped additional drop-off points will be arranged soon.

5. Keeping your workplace safe

Business closure guidance updated

Government guidance outlining which businesses and venues must remain closed has been [updated](#) to reflect the easing of restrictions on non-essential retail.

While non-essential retail businesses and venues are allowed to open, retail that is within an otherwise closed business, for example a museum gift shop, must remain closed, unless the retail unit is self-contained and it is possible for members of the public to enter from a place outside those premises. Shops, within business and venues that are otherwise open, for example a zoo gift shop, may operate as normal.

For premises that continue to be closed, staff may be present to make deliveries or provide services in response to orders such as those through telephone, online or mail. Click and collect services can also continue to operate for all retail premises, though the public must not enter closed premises.

A full list of business and venues that must remain closed can be found in the guidance.

New tool to help businesses identify whether they can reopen safely

The Government has developed [a tool](#) to help businesses in England to reopen safely during coronavirus. It encourages businesses to carry out a risk assessment and helps to identify the workplace adjustments that they should make. Employers have the legal responsibility to protect their employees and other people on site, such as customers and visitors. This tool will help businesses to easily find out what they should do. Employees can also use this tool to check what their workplace needs to do to keep people safe.

Updated Government guides

The guides to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the coronavirus pandemic have been [updated](#) to reflect industry feedback and to include guidance on test and trace, safer travel and managing security risks.

Safer workplace case studies

You can watch the Government's [safer workplace case studies](#) to see how a range of workplace settings are returning to work safely.

You can also [visit the Coronavirus Business Support blog](#) to read examples of how businesses such as [Rossiter Books](#) and [Barratt Homes](#) have followed the government's working safely guidance.

Test and Trace workplace guidance

The guidance on the NHS test and trace service for employers has been [updated](#).

If there is more than one case of coronavirus associated with a workplace, employers should contact their local health protection team to report the suspected outbreak. A link to a tool that identifies the relevant local health protection team has been included in the guidance.

Working safely in care homes and delivering home care

Guidance for those working in care homes has been [updated](#). Additional questions and answers have been added to the document and some answers have been amended. A section relating to care for people with learning disabilities and/or autism has also been added, and further detail has been provided on some of the recommendations.

The guidance on how to work safely in domiciliary care in England has also been [updated](#) with a range of additional information.

Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care

The [guidance](#) on safe working in education, childcare and children's social care has been updated to clarify PPE advice and changes in access to testing.

6. Importing and exporting goods in 2021

Introduction of border controls

Following the announcement in February that the UK would implement full border controls on imports coming into GB from the EU, the UK has taken [the decision](#) to introduce the new border controls in three stages up until 1 July 2021. The stages are:

- From January 2021 (the end of the Transition Period): Traders importing standard goods, covering everything from clothes to electronics, will need to prepare for basic customs requirements, such as keeping sufficient records of imported goods, and will have up to six months to complete customs declarations. While tariffs will need to be paid on all imports, payments can be deferred until the customs declaration has been made. There will be checks on controlled goods like alcohol and tobacco. Businesses will also need to consider how they account for VAT on imported goods. There will also be physical checks at the point of destination on all high-risk live animals and a proportion of low-risk live animals.
- From April 2021: All products of animal origin (POAO) – for example meat, pet food, honey, milk or egg products – and all regulated plants and plant products will also require pre-notification and the relevant health documentation.
- From July 2021: Traders moving all goods will have to make declarations at the point of importation and pay relevant tariffs. Full Safety and Security declarations will be required, while for SPS commodities there will be an increase in physical checks and the taking of samples: checks for animals, plants and their products will now take place at GB Border Control Posts.

To support businesses with the new processes taking effect next year, the Government has developed a [new £50m package](#) to boost the capacity of customs intermediaries – including customs brokers, freight forwarders and express parcel operators – providing businesses with further support. This funding will support intermediaries with recruitment, training and supplying IT equipment to help handle customs declarations. Rules will also be changed to remove barriers for intermediaries taking on new clients. Applications for the new funding will be open from July. Details of the new funding is expected from HMRC in due course. You can find a list of custom agents and fast parcel operators on [gov.uk](#).

Additionally, the Government has committed to building new border facilities in Great Britain for carrying out required checks, such as customs compliance, transit, and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) checks, as well as providing targeted support to ports to build new infrastructure. The Government is consulting with ports across the UK to agree what infrastructure is required.

Importing animals, animal products and high-risk food and feed not of animal origin from a non-EU country, from 1 January 2021

You can find out [what businesses need to do](#) to import animals, animal products, high-risk food and feed into the UK from 1 January 2021.

Importing and exporting plants and plant products from 1 January 2021

You can also find out [how to trade](#) in plants and plant products, including trees, inside and outside the EU from 1 January 2021.

Questionnaire for businesses who move goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland

At the end of the transition period when the Northern Ireland Protocol comes into force there will be changes to the way goods move between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. For businesses to keep up to date with changes, they will need to fill in the Northern Ireland Protocol [questionnaire](#) on screen, save it, then email to: hmrctraders@hmrc.gov.uk.