

South Cambridgeshire

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Coronavirus Business Advice and Support Update – Friday 26 June 2020

The information in this newsletter is correct as of Friday 26 June 2020, but we suggest monitoring the key webpages outlined below as well as the [Council's website](#) for the latest updates.

Calling all High Street and retail businesses

Join us at the next Greater Cambridge Business Forum

Share your experiences, hopes and needs as your retail or high street business returns to trading as lockdown restrictions ease.

South Cambridgeshire District Council, with Cambridge City Council, invite you to take part in an online Business Forum on **Wednesday 8 July at 6pm**.

Local MPs and Council Leaders want to better understand what it feels like to be a small business working in the high street environment in these unprecedented times, and the early challenges you face since reopening your doors.

The virtual session will give you the opportunity to raise any ongoing or new issues directly with Council Leaders and to hear from them and the three local MPs in Greater Cambridge. This will help the Councils to tailor the very best support for businesses who need it, and MPs can take your comments straight back to Westminster to raise as appropriate.

In order for us to send you a link to the live event, please [register your interest online](#) by 6 July. To help us to manage the available time most effectively, please submit any questions in advance when registering your interest using the above booking form.

Feed into the South Cambridgeshire District Council online survey about your experiences

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.

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.

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1. Grants, funding and finance

Discretionary Grants Scheme now closed

South Cambridgeshire District Council's [Discretionary Grants Scheme](#) closed at midnight on Monday 22 June. The team are now reviewing the applications we have received and will be in touch with businesses as soon as possible.

Government grants for businesses

As part of its initial response to the Coronavirus crisis, the Government announced [two grant funding schemes](#) to support certain small businesses, and certain businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors.

To date, we have paid out £22.95m to just over 1950 businesses, providing vital support to businesses across the area. However, there are still a small number of businesses that may be eligible to receive a grant but have not submitted a claim – particularly amongst those businesses who may be eligible for the [Small Business Grant Fund](#).

If you, or another business you're aware of, receive small business rate relief (SBRR) or rural rate relief (RRR) on your business rates bill and haven't yet received a grant, please [visit our website](#) to find out more and submit your claim.

NatWest Social & Community Capital Coronavirus Response Fund

NatWest has launched a [new £1m fund](#) to help organisations across the UK who employ people from disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. Social enterprises, charities and community businesses can apply for grants of between £5,000 and £50,000 to help them survive the crisis. The closing date for applications is 9am on Monday 29 June 2020.

Live funding opportunities overview

The table below contains an overview of funding opportunities that have been mentioned in previous versions of this newsletter (back to 29 May 2020) that are still open to applications.

| Fund/Source | Outline | Deadline |
|--|---|---|
| Benevolent Society of the BIPP | Support for those in the photographic industry who have been affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. | Ongoing |
| Dairy Response Fund | Funding to support dairy farmers in England. | 14 August 2020 |
| Covid-19 Emergency Heritage at Risk Response Fund | Grants to fund urgent maintenance, repairs and surveys at historic buildings and sites to assist with re-opening. | 28 June 2020 (for Expressions of Interest) |
| Edge Post Covid-19 Revival Fund | Funding for projects addressing a post Covid-19 education scenario. | 9 July 2020 |
| Art Fund Respond and Reimagine Grants | Funding to help museums, galleries and cultural organisations respond to Covid-19. | 6 July 2020 (for the first round of applications) |
| GroceryAid Crisis Grants | Grants to help those who work or have worked in the grocery industry, with financial hardship caused during Covid-19. | Ongoing |
| Coronavirus Community Support Fund: funding under £10,000 ; funding over £10,000 | Funding to support organisations delivering services to people and communities affected by Covid-19. | Ongoing |
| Forces Communities Together Programme | Grants towards projects for people from Armed Forces communities who are isolated as a result of Covid-19 | 30 June 2020 |
| Clinks Covid-19 Response Grants | Funding for voluntary organisations working in the criminal justice system. | Ongoing |

Reminder – VAT deferral period ending

As outlined in last week's newsletter, 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 2020 and 30 June 2020, 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 – get in touch as soon as possible, and before the payment is due;
- For advice and information on [other support](#) available.

2. Innovation funding and support

Research funding for power electronics, machines and drives (PEMD) technologies

Innovate UK has up to £15m available to support business-led research that will develop supply chains and manufacturing capability for PEMD technologies across all sectors, and support the development of new technologies that enable zero-emission vehicles.

[Up to £5m is available](#) to support business-led projects that aim to improve the UK supply chain for power electronics, machines, and drives. [A further £10m is available](#) to support feasibility studies and research and development projects looking to develop technologies for zero or very low emissions vehicles, or electric vehicle charging. The deadline for applications for both strands of funding is the 29 July 2020.

3. Support for businesses

HMRC live webinars

With changes to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme set to kick in from the 1 July 2020, HMRC are hosting a webinar to take you through the changes, flexible furloughing, claim period and key dates. There are four opportunities to access the live webinar between 30 June and 1 July – you can [sign up to join one of the webinars](#) now.

HMRC have also added more dates to their popular Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate scheme webinar, which gives the latest on who can claim, who you can claim for, how to make a claim, what you may be entitled to, and more. They're currently offering two sessions on the 30 June and 7 July, which you can [sign up to](#) now.

Zoom event for businesses seeking specialist exporting support

Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce are hosting their latest monthly Zoom event for businesses looking to drive growth and expand their customer base through exporting. This month's event will cover the critical importance of cultural awareness in your global communications, and tricks and tips to get your key messages right internationally. The event is free and open to all business. [Sign up via Eventbrite](#).

'Bounce back' plan for agriculture, food and drink industry launched by the Government

On 22 June 2020, the Government launched a ['bounce back' plan](#) of trade measures for the agriculture, food and drink industry, to help support businesses that have been impacted by coronavirus. The range of measures, announced by the Department for International Trade (DIT) and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) will offer immediate support to help businesses in those industries grow their trade activity overseas.

New Government measures to help the construction industry

Also on 22 June 2020, the Government announced [new measures to help the construction industry](#) boost building and return to work safely. These include extensions to planning permission deadlines, speeding up of planning appeals and more flexible working hours for builders following agreement with their local council.

4. Keeping your workplace safe

On 23 June 2020, [the Government announced a raft of changes to lockdown measures in England](#). Particularly, it announced that a range of business will be able to re-open on 4 July 2020, and that guidance will allow people to keep a social distance of 'one metre plus', where it is not possible to stay two metres apart.

In line with those changes, the Government has updated its [workplace-specific guidance documents](#), including introducing specific new guidance for [hotels and guest accommodation](#), [heritage locations](#), [close contact services](#) (e.g. hairdressers), [the visitor economy](#) and [restaurants, pubs and bars](#).

It has also updated its [guidance on staying safe outside your home](#) to reflect the changes to social distancing measures. Particularly, the guidance recommends that you keep two

metres away from people as a precaution, or one metre when you can mitigate the risk by taking other precautions.

5. Updates to Government Guidance

Update to guidance on claiming back Statutory Sick Pay for TUPE transferred employees

Government [guidance](#) on claiming back Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), paid due to coronavirus, has been updated to outline how employers can claim back SSP paid to TUPE transferred employees, under certain conditions. As the new employer, you can only make claims for SSP that you have paid – a claim cannot include SSP paid by the previous employer.

Updated service to upload a document to Companies House

As part of its response to coronavirus, Companies House have introduced a [temporary service](#) to upload a document to Companies House. The latest release of the service allows users to upload their change of constitution forms.

Update to guidance on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

With changes to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme set to kick in from 1 July 2020, HMRC have updated the [guidance available on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#), to provide more information for employers about flexible furloughing and overpayments.

6. 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@scams.gov.uk into your email as we are keen to understand the impacts of the crisis on the district's businesses.