

Coronavirus Business Advice and Support Update – Thursday 9 April 2020

Please note that the information provided in this newsletter is correct as of the afternoon of Thursday 9 April 2020. The situation is fastmoving and we will be sending out regular updates to local businesses. However, we would suggest monitoring the key webpages outlined below as well as the [Council's website](#) for changes in the advice and support available.

Reminder: Sources of information and support for businesses

For the latest information and advice, employers and business owners should read the government's [guidance for employees, employers and businesses](#) and the Government's new [Business Support](#) webpages.

If you can't find the information that you need from the published information, advice and guidance you can speak directly to an advisor on the Government's Business Support Helpline. The number to call is: [0300 456 3565](#).

You can also speak to advisors on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Growth Hub's new Coronavirus business helpline [01480 277923](#).

Financial updates

Business Grants

The Government announced there would be support for small businesses, and businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. This support will take the form of two grant funding schemes, *the Small Business Grant Fund* and *the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund*.

[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 sent emails and letters inviting eligible businesses to apply for the grants using our online form: www.scambs.gov.uk/governmentbusinessgrants.

If you have received the email or letter invitation from us, your account is pre-loaded with the payment, so if you are able to successfully complete the application form, the payment will be made by BACS within two working days, following which the payment should be received into your account (subject to the usual delay of a few days experienced with BACS payments).

If you have received the email or letter invitation from us but have not been able to successfully complete the application form (please note the information must EXACTLY match the information on your rates bill), please email our dedicated inbox with your account reference number, and a phone number to call you back on: businessgrants@scambs.gov.uk. We will endeavour to respond to these emails within two working days to help people access these grants as quickly as possible.

If you have not received an email or letter invitation, but you believe you are eligible for the grants, please email businessgrants@scambs.gov.uk, with the email subject 'ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANT FUNDING' – this will help us to direct your email to relevant colleagues as quickly as possible. As the situation may not be as simple to resolve, this may take slightly longer for us to respond. Please bear with us as we want to help everyone to access funding they are entitled to as quickly as possible and we are working as fast as we can.

In the past week we have successfully granted over £8 million to 672 businesses in South Cambridgeshire.

If you are not entitled to the two grants mentioned above but would still like some support in working out what other funding may be available to you, please [visit our website](#) where there is information about a number of non-Government grant schemes. If you would like a member of our business support team to discuss any other support that may be available to you, please email openforbusiness@scambs.gov.uk.

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 in the last few days, but think you should qualify for the relief, please e-mail to: NNDR@scambs.gov.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:

South Cambridgeshire's retail, hospitality and leisure businesses have so far been awarded around £13.7 million through the Government's expanded retail business rates relief scheme.

For children's nurseries

The Government announced a [business rates holiday for nurseries](#) in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year. Properties that will benefit from the relief will be ones occupied by providers on Ofsted's Early Years Register and wholly or mainly used for the

provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Council will be re-billing all eligible properties/businesses identified shortly. We thank you for your patience while we do this.

Funding for charities

The Government has announced £750 million of [funding for frontline charities](#) to ensure that they can continue their work. This will include:

- £360 million directly allocated by government departments to charities providing key services and supporting vulnerable people during the crisis, for example:
 - Hospices, to help increase capacity and give stability to the sector
 - St John Ambulance, to support the NHS
 - victims' charities, including domestic abuse, to help with potential increase in demand for charities providing these services
 - vulnerable children's charities, so they can continue delivering services on behalf of local authorities
 - Citizens Advice, to increase the number of staff providing advice during this difficult time
- £370 million for small and medium-sized charities, including through a grant to the [National Lottery Community Fund](#) for those in England, to support those organisations at the heart of local communities which are making a big difference during the outbreak, including those delivering food, essential medicines and providing financial advice
- Matching donations to the National Emergencies Trust as part of the [BBC's Big Night In](#) fundraiser later this month – pledging a minimum of £20 million

Grants for young business owners

The £5 million [Prince's Trust and NatWest Enterprise Relief Fund](#) will offer grants to 18 to 30 year olds across the UK who are self-employed and/or running their own business. In conjunction with cash grants, the initiative will offer one-to-one support and guidance to anyone who needs it and who may be worried about their future.

Grants can be used to maintain core business operations during the crisis, as well as to meet any existing financial commitments, such as paying for essential equipment or settling invoices from suppliers. Additionally, grants will also support young people to diversify their business to respond to opportunities created by the crisis.

New guidance on the Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme

HMRC has published [new online guidance](#) on the Statutory Sick pay Rebate Scheme which includes information about who can use the scheme and the records employers must keep.

HMRC has said that its staff are working urgently to set up a system for reimbursement. Existing systems are not set up to facilitate payments to employers. Details about when the new Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme can be accessed and when employers can make a claim, will be announced as soon as possible.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

The Government has published [up-dated guidance](#) on how to claim for your employees' wages through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

It is important to note in order to claim you must have:

- Created and started a PAYE payroll scheme on or before 28 February 2020
- Enrolled for [PAYE online](#) - this can take up to 10 days
- A UK bank account

Any entity with a UK payroll can apply, including businesses, charities, recruitment agencies and public authorities.

The online service you'll use to claim is not available yet. The Government expect it to be available by the end of April 2020.

Funding for new projects

Covid-19 Capital Grant Scheme

The Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority's '[Covid-19 Capital Grant Scheme](#)' offers grants from £2k to £150k to small and medium-sized businesses for new capital investment projects. The object of the scheme is to help qualifying companies strengthen their capacity to survive the emergency and bounce back strongly when it passes.

Examples of investments which could attract such grants include buying new kit, building new extensions, the updating of production lines, IT infrastructure, and upgrading logistics.

Innovate UK

[£20 million is available](#) from Innovate UK for projects that respond to new and urgent needs in UK and global communities during and following the Covid-19 pandemic. Project applications must demonstrate both realistic and significant benefits for society (including communities, families and individuals) or an industry that has been severely impacted and/or permanently disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. They also must have total eligible costs between £25,000 and £50,000; be able to start by 1st June 2020 at the latest and be no longer than 6 months in duration.

Innovations could include:

- new technology allowing retailers to respond better to sudden spikes of consumer demand and improve deliveries across the UK
- new services for families to connect with and remotely monitor their elderly or vulnerable relatives, giving people peace of mind that their loved ones are receiving the services they require such as food deliveries, doctor's appointments and paying bills
- creating education tools which seamlessly integrate the classroom with the kitchen table, allowing teachers to remotely set dynamic tasks, support vulnerable children and make certain no child is left behind

The competition is open until midday on Friday 17 April 2020.

Funding for the cultural sector

Support for workers in film, TV and cinema

The Film and TV COVID-19 [Emergency Relief Fund](#) has been created by a partnership of The Film and TV Charity and The BFI. They're able to provide one-off grants from £500 to £2,500 to active workers in film, TV and cinema facing significant financial hardship as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. Applications for grants are open until Wednesday 22 April 2020.

The Authors' Emergency Fund

Funding is available to help [support authors](#) impacted financially by the Coronavirus crisis. Applications are open to all professional authors who are resident in the UK or British subjects – including all types of writers, illustrators, literary translators, scriptwriters, poets, journalists and others – for whom author-related activities make up a substantial amount of their annual income. Grants are likely to be up to £2,000 and designed to meet urgent need with the possibility of review as the situation continues.

Heritage Lottery Emergency Fund

The Heritage Lottery Emergency Fund is available to organisations across the full breadth of heritage, including historic sites, industrial and maritime heritage, museums, libraries and archives, parks and gardens, landscapes and nature.

Funding of between £3,000 and £50,000 is available. You can find out more about who can apply, how they will prioritise applications and what they will fund on [Heritage Lottery Fund's website](#). The application form will be available from Wednesday 15 April and organisations will be able to apply until 30 June 2020.

Support

Support from Business Representative Organisations and Trade Associations

The Government has provided a list of [Business Representative Organisations and Trade Associations](#) that businesses can speak to get advice. Sector specific guidance and Q&A are included on the websites of many of their websites many of them are happy to hear from non-members and members alike, so do get in touch to find out more. Examples include:

[Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed \(IPSE\)](#)

[British Chambers of Commerce \(BCC\)](#)

[Enterprise Nation](#)

[Federation of Small Businesses](#)

[The Institute of Charter Accountants for England and Wales \(ICAEW\)](#)

Business insurance

The Association of British Insurers has published [advice and guidance on business insurance](#) which answers a number of the questions that businesses may have regarding Business Interruption Insurance and how to manage their insurance during the Coronavirus crisis.

BT Skills for tomorrow

With the spread of the coronavirus, having the right digital skills to do business online is more important than ever. BT is working with a range of partners, such as Google Digital Garage and Small Business Britain, to run a host of [free webinars and courses](#) with experts to help SMEs cope.

These online courses will help SME owners and their employees improve their digital skills through new online tools, social media advice and new digital tips and tricks, empowering them with the skills they need today during these challenging times.

Expansion of protection against non-payment for UK exporters

UK Export Finance has announced it is [expanding the scope](#) of its Export Insurance Policy (EXIP) to cover transactions with the EU, Australia, Canada, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and the USA with immediate effect.

This will help companies concerned about the impact of Coronavirus to export with confidence, by offering insurance that can cover up to 95% of the value of an export contract. The insurance will protect against the risk of non-payment should UK exporters' customers become insolvent or their government actions make fulfilling the contract impossible.

Guidance

Social distancing in the workplace

To support businesses that remain open during this period in England, the government has published [additional](#) guidance to assist employers, businesses and their staff in staying open safely during coronavirus (COVID-19). There is also new [sector specific guidance](#):

- [Shops running a pick-up or delivery service](#)
- [Tradespeople and working in people's homes](#)
- [Construction](#)
- [Manufacturing and processing businesses](#)
- [Retail](#)
- [Logistics businesses](#)
- [Outdoor businesses](#)

- [Farming: visiting farms for animal health and welfare](#)
- [Fishing or other short-term offshore work](#)
- [Cargo-shipping or other long-term offshore work](#)
- [Transport businesses](#)
- [Waste management businesses](#)

The Government have stated that these guidelines are not intended to be comprehensive or to represent every business's situation but are illustrative examples. Businesses should also look at the advice being published by trade associations and similar groups on how to apply government guidance in their sector.

Keeping your business and employees safe

The Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has published [advice on keeping businesses safe from fire](#) during the Coronavirus crisis including where there is lone working or where buildings are not in use.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary have [published their answers](#) to the questions that they are most commonly asked.

A reminder: waste collection

If Greater Cambridge Waste collects your rubbish, please note that they are still collecting business and organisation's waste if bins are placed in their usual locations. If you'd like to suspend your collections please email trade@scambs.gov.uk.

Transport and travel guidance

A [new hub on gov.uk](#) brings together Information for people using transport or working in the transport sector during the Coronavirus outbreak. This includes information on:

- [Using public transport](#)
- [Driving private vehicles - cars, vans, motorbikes](#)
- [Bus and lorry drivers](#)
- [Freight, bus and road transport businesses](#)
- [Transport workers](#)
- [Maritime and shipping](#)
- [Aviation and flying](#)
- [Overseas travel](#)

Updated Government Guidance

The Government guidance for [apprentices, employers, training providers and assessment organisations](#) has been updated with new information on continuing training and end point assessment for furloughed apprentices, and pausing new funding audits.

Updated guidance on the [temporary relaxation of the EU and GB drivers' hours rules for drivers carrying goods by road](#) has confirmed the continuation of the current temporary relaxation until 21 April 2020 and included a further minor relaxation of the EU drivers' hours rules.

The [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency](#) has updated its guidance and there is [updated guidance](#) for anyone wish to export Personal Protective equipment.

Useful webinars

HMRC are delivering a programme of webinars on the measures to support employers, people and self-employed individuals through this period of disruption caused by COVID-19. You can watch a video of the recorded webinar on the HMRC YouTube channel [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): helping employers to support employees](#). You can also register to attend a free webinar to learn more about the support available to help you deal with the economic impacts of coronavirus by registering [here](#).

Take a look at [Cambridge Network's events pages](#) to find a range of webinars that could help your business through the next few months.

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