



Ein cyf/Our ref KS/01031/20

Dawn Bowden AM

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26 March 2020

Dear Dawn,

Thank you for your email of 19 March on behalf of your constituent regarding the impact on a childcare business following the coronavirus outbreak.

I recognise the incredibly difficult and uncertain circumstances that businesses are experiencing. The Welsh Government is absolutely committed to providing the support and assurance the business community needs.

Following the initial package of £200m support announced on 17 March, we have now extended this and will be providing almost £1.4 billion of support for businesses. All retail, leisure and hospitality businesses with a rateable value of £500,000 or below will receive 100% non-domestic rates relief in 2020-21. This means that in total, over 70,000 Welsh businesses will pay no rates at all for the year - the new relief will be in place from 1 April. Businesses who benefit won't have to pay bills they would otherwise have been paying from that date. A grant of £25,000 will also be offered for businesses in the same sector with a rateable value of between £12,001 and £51,000.

It also provides a £10,000 grant to all businesses eligible for Small Business Rates Relief with a rateable value of £12,000 or less. We are working as fast as possible to get the money out to businesses but this has to be subject to due process and governance. Separately, the Development Bank of Wales has loan and equity funding available immediately to Welsh businesses.

We acknowledge there remains, however, an urgent need for government intervention in a number of areas, including, for example, providing support for the self-employed and helping businesses meet the cost of Non Domestic Rates in other sectors of the economy, as well as rent of commercial premises.

To address emerging gaps in the UK Government's interventions, the Welsh Government will put in place a cross-sector, cross-Government fund to respond to the specific needs of businesses, during what will be a managed period of enterprise hibernation. This will help meet fixed costs which are no longer covered by earned income and which are not adequately addressed by the UK Government interventions. It will also assist self-employed citizens, should UK Government not step in with direct assistance this week.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

This will be designed specifically to include social enterprises and charitable organisations which have until now relied in whole or part on revenues from trading. We intend to announce precise details as soon as we possibly can and clearly the exact coverage will depend on what further measures the Chancellor of the Exchequer announces.

Meanwhile, all of the measures announced by the Chancellor in the Budget will apply in Wales - Statutory Sick Pay reclaim, the temporary Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme to be delivered by the British Business Bank and the 'A Time to Pay' scheme.

On 20 March, the Chancellor announced a further series of measures to support people, jobs and businesses. This includes a Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme which will help pay people's wages and deferring VAT and Income Tax payments. All UK businesses, including those in Wales are eligible for these two new strands of support which are being administered through Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). HMRC is working urgently to set up the system to facilitate payments to employers.

The links below will take you to further information on specific subject areas:

- Business Wales – Information on support provided via the Welsh Government, including Business Rate Relief and Business Grant Schemes  
<https://businesswales.gov.wales/government-support-businesses>
- Development Bank of Wales – information of services available via the Development Bank of Wales <https://developmentbank.wales/>
- UK Government Business support <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-employees-employers-and-businesses>
- HMRC also has a Coronavirus helpline for businesses and self-employed people and is available on 0800 0159 559.
- UK Government guidance to employers and businesses about Covid-19 including information and guidance on areas such as Statutory Sick Pay, advice for employees which have travelled to high risk areas and home working  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

Please refer to the Business Wales website for further regular updates -  
<https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice>

With regards to the waiting times on the Business Wales Helpline, the Helpline is handling an unprecedented high volume of calls and live chat enquiries and some people have experienced longer wait times than usual. We apologise for this and have increased the capacity in the Helpline function to deal with the substantial increase in enquires

Yours sincerely,



**Ken Skates AC/AM**

Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales