



Ein cyf/Our ref KS/06099/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair, Petitions Committee

26 October 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter dated 9 October regarding supporting for SMEs in the hair and beauty industry during local lockdowns.

The Welsh Government recognises the incredibly difficult and uncertain circumstances currently being experienced by businesses and individuals. We are absolutely committed to providing the support and assurance the business community needs.

Local restrictions were introduced following discussions with the local authority, public health experts, police and NHS in response to a rapid increase in cases of coronavirus. They were in place to help reduce the spread of the virus and to protect people's health.

As you are aware we have since made the decision to introduce a short, sharp, shock to slow down the virus and buy us more time – a national fire break will be in place from 6pm on Friday 23 October and end on Monday 9 November

With coronavirus spreading rapidly in every part of Wales we need to act now, before it continues to accelerate and our NHS is overwhelmed. It will apply to everyone living in Wales and will replace the local restrictions which are in force in some parts of the country.

In response to the imminent national fire-break and in line with our principles of providing further support, we have created an enhanced Phase 3 of the Wales-only Economic Resilience Fund - almost £300m to support businesses affected by the fire-break and previous local lockdown measures.

The £80m Business Grants we announced on 28 September will be increased to £100m, which includes £20m ring-fenced for tourism and hospitality.

We know businesses will need support quickly. The eligibility checker for companies to find out if they can access funding for the Business Development Fund is now live. The Fund will be open for applications from the week commencing 26 October and remain open for four weeks (depending on levels of demand).

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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.

<https://gov.wales/economic-resilience-fund-find-out-if-your-business-eligible-support-third-phase>

Further information on the other grants which will be delivered by local authorities will be made available shortly on the Business Wales website and thereafter on the websites of individual local authorities.

All businesses required to close should also be able to access the support available from the UK Government – through the existing Job Retention Scheme or the new expanded Job Support Scheme.

However, we understand the real challenge this overlap presents for businesses and we are in dialogue with the UK Government's Treasury to resolve anomalies as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Ken Skates AS/MS

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