



This is the twenty fifth in our weekly COVID 19 Business Support Information

Cultural Recovery Fund Freelancer Grant: Phase 2 to reopen Monday 19th October 10:00am

The Phase 1 grant fund for freelancers is temporarily suspended for applications.

We are pleased to announce that Torfaen Council first phase have approved 37 applications totalling £92.5k worth of funding.

Phase 2 of the fund for all applications in every Local Authority will open on Monday 19 October at 10am. The Freelancer Grant was always planned to be delivered over 2 phases to allow those freelancers who needed more time to be apply to be able to do so. The length of time phase 2 is open will be dependent on the number of applications received by each Local Authority.

This funding is specifically for sub-sectors and roles that have been forced to cease work and/or face difficulty restarting because of the impact of Covid-19 restrictions. Use the **Eligibility Checker** to review the criteria prior to its re-opening on Monday 19 October at 10am

Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) Grant Extension

The SEISS Grant Extension provides critical support to the self-employed. The grant will be limited to self-employed individuals who are currently eligible for the SEISS and are actively continuing to trade but are facing reduced demand due to COVID-19.

The extension will provide two grants and will last for six months from November 2020 to April 2021. Grants will be paid in two lump sum instalments each covering a three-month period.

For further information please visit the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk).



Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Schemes and Future Fund extended

The UK Government is extending four temporary loan schemes that were designed to support UK businesses that are losing revenue and seeing their cash flow disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. More businesses will now be able to benefit from the:

- Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)
- Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)
- Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs)
- Future Fund

The schemes will be extended to 30 November 2020 for new applications.

For further information please visit the [British Business Bank website](#).

Winter Economy Plan: Extension of 15% VAT cut for tourism and hospitality sectors

The Chancellor Rishi Sunak outlined additional government support on 24th September 2020 aimed at providing certainty to businesses and workers impacted by coronavirus across the UK.

As part of the 'Winter Economy Plan' package, it was announced that the government will extend the temporary 15% VAT cut for the tourism and hospitality sectors to the end of March next year, 2021. This will give businesses in the sector - which has been severely impacted by the pandemic - the confidence to maintain staff as they adapt to a new trading environment. Read more at [GOV.UK](#)

New measures introduced for hospitality and retail business – FAQ (COVID-19)

All licensed premises in Wales are no longer allowed to serve alcohol after 10pm, and must close by 10.20pm. Licensed premises now have to provide table service only. Off-licences, including supermarkets and convenience stores, also have to stop selling alcohol at 10pm. On-line deliveries made by supermarkets and take-away delivery services will be permitted after 10pm but must not include alcohol.

The new measures are part of a package of co-ordinated actions to control the spread of coronavirus, which are being introduced across the UK and came into force in Wales at 6pm on 23 September and a [detailed list of frequently asked questions](#) is available.



Job Support Scheme

The new Job Support Scheme will be introduced from 1 November 2020 to protect jobs where businesses are facing lower demand over the winter months due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Under the scheme, which will run for six months, the UK Government will contribute towards the wages of employees who are working fewer than normal hours due to decreased demand.

You will continue to pay the wages for the hours your staff work. For the hours not worked, you and the UK Government will each pay one third of their usual wages (capped at £697.92 per month). You will need to meet your share of the pay for unworked hours and all your National Insurance contributions and statutory pension contributions, from your own funds. This means that employees will receive at least two thirds of their usual wages for the hours not worked. To be eligible, employees must:

- be registered on your PAYE payroll on or before 23 September 2020, this means a Real Time Information (RTI) submission notifying payment in respect of that employee must have been made to HMRC on or before 23 September 2020
- work at least 33% of their usual hours, the UK Government will consider whether to increase this minimum hours threshold after the first three months of the scheme

The Job Support Scheme will be open to employers across the UK even if you have not previously applied under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) which closes on 31 October 2020. Please visit the GOV.UK [Job Support Scheme factsheet](#).

Job Support Scheme expanded to firms required to close due to Covid Restrictions

In addition, the UK Chancellor announced (9 October) further details on how the Job Support Scheme will be **expanded to protect jobs and support businesses required to close due to COVID restrictions**. [View here](#).



Economic Resilience Fund Phase 3

Businesses across Wales can now find out if they can apply for funding from the third phase of the Economic Resilience Fund (ERF).

The [eligibility checker](#) will enable businesses to see if they can access the £80 million tranche of the fund, which will support firms with projects that can help them to transition to the economy of tomorrow.

Of this, £20 million will be ring fenced to support tourism and hospitality businesses who are facing particular challenges as they enter the winter months.

The £80 million worth of business development grants will be open to micro businesses, SMEs and large businesses:

- micro businesses (employing between 1 and 9 people) will be able to apply for up to £10,000 on the condition they match this with their own investment of at least 10 per cent
- SMEs (employing between 10 and 249 people) will be able to apply for up to £150,000 on the condition they match this with their own investment of at least 10% for small business (1-49 staff) and 20% for medium sized (50-249) business
- large businesses (employing 250+ people) will be able to apply for up to £200,000 on the condition they match this with their own investment of at least 50%

The Eligibility Checker for this part of the fund can be found at <https://fundchecker.businesswales.gov.wales/erfphase3>

The grant fund will be open for applications from the **week commencing 26 October 2020** and remain open for four weeks.



Local Lockdown Business Fund

This is a fund to provide financial assistance for businesses that are facing operational and financial challenges caused by the local restrictions imposed in their local area as a result of COVID-19.

The purpose of the fund is to support businesses with cash flow support to help them survive the economic consequences of the local restrictions put in place in their local area.

Businesses will be eligible to apply for this fund when their local area has been in lockdown for a minimum of 21 days. Applications will be open for businesses in each local area on or shortly after the 28th day of local restrictions having been in place, and will be administered by your Local Authority.

The fund consists of two separate grants:

- Local Lockdown Non Domestic Rate Grant
- Local Lockdown Discretionary Grant

For further information and guidance please visit the [Business Wales COVID-19 Support for Business page](#).

VAT reverse charge on construction services

The reverse charge measures for construction services will come into effect on 1 March 2021, in order to help the construction sector deal with the impacts of COVID-19.

From 1 March 2021 the domestic VAT reverse charge must be used for most supplies of building and construction services. The charge applies to standard and reduced-rate VAT services:

- for individuals or businesses who are registered for VAT in the UK

- reported within the Construction Industry Scheme

Visit the [GOV.UK website](#) to find out more about:

- What you need to do
- How to prepare
- When you must not use the reverse charge
- When you must use the reverse charge
- Plus other essential information



Arts Council of Wales Connect and Flourish Fund (Wales)

This funding aims to help the arts sector meet the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and develop new ways of working.

Grants of between £500 and £150,000 to create opportunities for individual artists and creative professionals to work with creative partner organisations to help them re-imagine themselves and develop new ideas and activities, or different ways of working.

The Arts Council is looking for exciting, ambitious projects that are artist led, audience or participant focused, and that engage and connect to the public. Funding will also respond to the challenges identified by the Black Lives Matter and #WeShallNotBeRemoved campaigns. Funding is provided by the National Lottery. The deadline for applications is the 4th November 2020. [More information](#)

Redundancy Support Service for Businesses

Torfaen Council's Economy and Skills department are working with partners to support Torfaen employers, and their employees, who are experiencing redundancy as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

If you are an employer who is having to make staff redundant during these difficult times, there is free support available for you and your employees from our Redundancy Support Service.

The Redundancy Support Service is a FREE service available to Torfaen employers of all sizes to help your employees find alternative employment and access new opportunities.

Support on offer includes:

- Job matching to current local vacancies
- Job searching and help with online vacancies
- CV Development
- Free training
- Career Planning
- Starting a business

For further information please follow the link and complete our short [online enquiry form](#)

Kickstart Scheme

The team can also provide you, the employer, with up to date information regarding the Governments new Kickstart Scheme. The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to employers to create job placements for 16 to 24 year olds. For an informal discussion, please contact: 01633 647743 – empolyability@torfaen.gov.uk



Self-Assessment customers to benefit from enhanced payment plans

From 1 October 2020 HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has increased the threshold for paying tax liabilities to £30,000 for Self-Assessment customers to help ease any potential financial burden they may be experiencing due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The online payment plan service can already be used to set up instalment arrangements for paying tax liabilities up to £10,000.

Customers who wish to set up their own self-serve **Time to Pay** arrangements must meet the following requirements:

- they need to have no:
 - outstanding tax returns
 - other tax debts
 - other HMRC payment plans set up
- the debt needs to be between £32 and £30,000
- the payment plan needs to be set up no later than 60 days after the due date of a debt

Customers using self-serve **Time to Pay** will be required to pay any interest on the tax owed. Interest will be applied to any outstanding balance from 1 February 2021.

Self-Assessment customers can [set up their own online payment plan to help spread the cost of their tax bill.](#)

Up and coming on line events for businesses

- 20th October, [Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Supply Chain Engagement Event](#)
- 21st October - [Capital Regional Graduate Scheme](#)
- 22nd October - [Torfaen Business Voice Networking Meeting](#)
- 4th November – [Torfaen Productivity Enhancement Programme](#)
- 9th November - [Brexit Q & A with Ken Skates MS & Lynne Neagle MS](#)



Economy & Enterprise Team – Business Support - If you need to get in touch with an enquiry complete your [details here](#) and we will contact you as soon as possible.

COVID-19: [guidance for employees, employers and businesses](#)

COVID-19: [Support for businesses](#)

Watch our twitter for further updates [@Torfaenbiz](#)

All editions of our COVID-19 e-shot can be found/viewed [here](#)

All editions of our COVID-19 e-shot are also available in Welsh [here](#)