

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES, THE SELF-EMPLOYED AND SMALL BUSINESSES
DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

As I'm sure you are already aware, recent legislation announced by the Government and HMRC on 20 March 2020 has been put in place in order to try to help businesses and individuals if they get into financial difficulty during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This includes:

Allowing the self-employed to access Universal Credits or Employment and Support Allowance if they have COVID-19 or are advised to stay at home, which is set at the same rate as Statutory Sick Pay (currently £94.25 per week).

If you are an employee and your employer cannot cover your wages due to COVID-19 they may be able to access something called the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (this is currently being developed and application to the scheme will be available ASAP). To qualify for this scheme you will have to become a furloughed worker – meaning you are kept on your employer's payroll but you will not be able to undertake work for them while you are furloughed, however you will remain employed. This will enable your employer to claim a grant of up to 80% of your wages, to a maximum of £2,500 a month. (**)

the latest guidance for employees can be found in the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/.../guidan.../covid-19-guidance-for-employees>

VAT registered businesses will be able to defer paying VAT. The deferral will apply from 20 March until 30 June 2020 (or a later date if needed).

Those in the self-assessment income tax system will be able to defer paying income tax due on 31 July 2020 until 31 January 2021.

No application is needed for either the VAT deferral or income tax payment deferral as this will be automatically applied.

Small and medium-sized businesses (= employers with fewer than 250 employees) who are paying statutory sick pay (SSP) to employees who are absent due to COVID-19 will be able to reclaim SSP for up to 2 weeks per eligible employee.

Businesses that are unable to cover their wage bills will be able to access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – details can be found above (see **).

Businesses based in England and in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors or nursery businesses will receive a business rates holiday for the 2020/2021 tax year, which will be applied to your next council tax bill in April 2020.

The Retail and Hospitality Grant Scheme will provide businesses based in England and in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors with a cash grant of up to £10,000/£25,000 per property based on its rateable value.

A temporary Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme is to be launched that will support small and medium-sized businesses to access bank lending and overdrafts.

The latest on support for businesses can be found in the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/.../guidan.../covid-19-support-for-businesses>

If you need any help accessing financial support during these trying times please contact me and I will do everything I can to help.

Take care and stay safe

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