

COVID-19: business update 30 April



Hello, I'm Cllr Mike Every, Cabinet Member for Finance. The latest league table showing councils' performance distributing the two coronavirus grant schemes was published this week and Cotswold District Council ranked 60th out of 314 councils, having successfully paid grants to over 77% of eligible businesses. Thanks to the team for their hard work getting these grants out.

However, we are still trying to trace some businesses that we believe might be eligible. The grants apply to either:

- Businesses that receive Small Business Rate Relief or Rural Rate Relief, or
- Retail, hospitality or leisure businesses in a commercial property with rateable value below £51,000

If your business fits one or both of these criteria and you haven't let us have your details, please complete and return the form using the link below.

Beware of scams!

We are aware of some very realistic looking scam emails with links asking businesses to **authorise** their bank details to receive the business grants.

The ONLY way to submit a grant application in the Cotswolds is to complete the form and email it to revenues@cotswold.gov.uk.

We do NOT ask businesses to provide their details in any other way. Any other request you see, however realistic, is not from us. If you have any doubt at all, please contact us at revenues@cotswold.gov.uk or on 01285 623034.

COVID-19 business grants

100% Gov't backed loan scheme

The government has announced a new 'Bounce Back' Loan scheme for small and medium-sized businesses to borrow between £2,000 and £50,000. The government will guarantee 100% of the loan and there won't be any fees or interest to pay for the first 12 months.

It is hoped that the Bounce Back loans will plug the gap for those struggling to borrow through the [CBILS](#) scheme and it opens for applications on Monday 04 May.

Further information on the Bounce Back loan scheme

Support from Jobcentre Plus

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on many parts of the labour market. Jobcentre Plus has launched a new website for businesses offering a range of advice to help overcome challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Whether you need to expand rapidly or are worried about redundancies, you can find advice on next steps and the best ways to support your staff.

Support for Employers from Jobcentre Plus

Responsible innovation guide

A new standard guide for 'responsible innovation' has been published by Innovate UK and the British Standards Institution. The document, snappily known as 'PAS 440:2020 Responsible Innovation Guide' provides guidance for companies that want to innovate responsibly and to demonstrate their

responsible behaviour to investors, customers and other stakeholders.

The guide is free to download from the BSI website.

Download the Responsible Innovation Guide

Online learning to boost workplace skills

The government has launched a free online learning platform to boost workplace skills. The site, known as The Skills Toolkit, is designed to help people gain new skills while they are staying at home. The courses have been selected on the advice of experts and leading employers to make sure they meet the needs of business.

The Skills Toolkit

Other helpful organisations

Several business groups are coming up trumps with help and advice for businesses. The ones below are good but do also check the trade association for your own sector.

- [Enterprise Nation](#) - a vibrant community of small businesses and business advisers with a website packed full of resources
- [Federation of Small Businesses](#) (FSB) - the UK's largest grassroots business campaigning group
- [Institute of Directors](#) (IoD) - business organisation for company directors
- [Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed](#) (IPSE) - represents the UK's self-employed including freelancers, interim managers, consultants and contractors
- [UK Hospitality](#) - represents the broad hospitality sector – covering everything from bars, coffee shops, contract catering, hotels, nightclubs, visitor attractions and other leisure venues

- [Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership](#) (GFirst) - Growth hub for Gloucestershire
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Summary of business support

The government's business support website sets out the full range of business support measures that have been made available to UK businesses and employees.

Government business support website

Keeping up to date

Please forward this email to others to whom this might be useful and encourage them to sign up to further updates. Please note that you can access previous editions of this newsletter too.