



LRF Communications Briefing – Covid19

22 December 2020

LRFBIZ V46– ECONOMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY VERSION

Headlines



GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Greater Lincolnshire LEP Christmas Edition and message from our Chair [here](#).

Stay safe this Christmas, and here's to a healthy and positive New Year!

Best Wishes
The LEP Team

Tier 4: 'Stay at Home' Alert Level

As a response to a rapid rise in infections attributed to the rapid spread of a new variant of Covid19, tougher restrictions have been introduced for London, large parts of the South East and East of England, with a new Tier 4: 'Stay at Home' alert level, that came into force at 00:01 hrs Sunday 20 December 2020. As a result, the following areas have moved from Tier 3 to Tier 4:

- Kent, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Surrey (excluding Waverley), Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth, Rother and Hastings;
- London (all 32 boroughs and the City of London); and
- the East of England (Bedford, Central Bedford, Milton Keynes, Luton, Peterborough, Hertfordshire, Essex excluding Colchester, Uttlesford and Tendring).

For business, those who can should work from home. Where people cannot work from home, they should still travel to work, for example, in the construction and manufacturing sectors.

Non-essential retail, indoor leisure (such as swimming pools and gyms), indoor entertainment (such as cinemas, bowling alleys and casinos), and personal care sectors (such as nail bars, barbers and hairdressers) must all close. Covid19 support is available to businesses:

- Loans, tax relief and cash grants are available
- Employers might be eligible for financial support to pay wages
- Self-employed people might be eligible for a taxable grant covering 80% of trading profits

Business support advice can be found [here](#) and on the Business Lincolnshire [coronavirus](#) pages.

New travel advice between the tiers: People should not travel into or out of Tier 4 areas and, those in Tier 4 areas will not be permitted to travel abroad, apart from limited exceptions including work. People in Tiers 1, 2, and 3 should stay local. A copy of the Prime Minister's statement announcing the changes can be found [here](#).

Key messaging:

- The new strain transmits more easily than the previous variant but there is no evidence that it is more likely to cause severe disease or mortality.
- Data from Whole Genome Sequencing, epidemiology and modelling suggest the new variant 'VUI - 202012/01' (the first Variant Under Investigation in December 2020) transmits more easily than other strains.
- We currently have no evidence that the variant is more likely to cause severe disease or mortality - but we are continuing investigations to understand this better.
- The way to control this virus is the same, whatever the variant. It will not spread if we avoid close contact with others.

Tier 3 Travel Key Messaging:

- Where possible, you should stay local and avoid travelling outside of your local area, meaning your village or town, or part of a city where possible. People should continue to travel for reasons such as work, education, medical attention or caring responsibilities.
- You should still avoid travelling outside your Tier 3 area other than for the reasons like those above, and reduce the number of journeys you make wherever possible.
- Walk or cycle where you can and plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Where that is not possible and you need to travel. Read [safer travel guidance](#).
- Avoid car sharing with anyone from outside your household or your support bubble - read [guidance on car sharing](#).
- You must not travel if you are experiencing any coronavirus symptoms, are self-isolating as a result of coronavirus symptoms, are sharing a household or support bubble with somebody with symptoms, or have been told to self-isolate after being contacted by NHS Test and Trace.

Business and Economic Updates

UK's furlough scheme to be extended

The Chancellor announced on 17 December that the UK's furlough scheme will be extended for an extra month until the end of April 2021. Under the furlough scheme, employees placed on leave receive 80% of their pay, up to a maximum of £2,500 a month. Businesses will also be given until the end of March 2021 to access the Bounce Back Loan Scheme, Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, and the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme. These had been due to close at the end of January. This announcement comes ahead of the Budget, which the Chancellor has confirmed will take place on 3 March 2021. Further information can be found [here](#).

The Chancellor has also announced that the Budget will take place on 3rd March where he will provide a further update on wider Covid19 economic support.

Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs

New Guidance has been issued that sets out support for wet-led pubs that have been severely impacted over the Christmas period due to temporary local restrictions. Eligible businesses may be entitled to a one-off cash grant of £1,000 from their local council in areas under Tier 2 or Tier 3 local restrictions. Pubs may be eligible if they are:

- based in England
- derive less than 50% of sales from food
- are in an area subject to Tier 2 or Tier 3 local restrictions since 2 December 2020
- were established in the pub before 1 December 2020

[Check eligibility for the Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs](#)

Visit Lincoln support to tourism and hospitality sectors

Visit Lincoln continues to work with industry partners, Visit England and the Department of Culture Media and Sports (DCMS) to update and support the sector with the latest Christmas Covid guidance. Click here to keep connected [here](#).

Midlands Engine

2020 has been exceptional in so many ways, and across Midlands Engine it's been a year of incredible partnership, despite adversity. Visit the [Midlands Engine Review 2020 film](#) which celebrates all that has been achieved this year together.

MadeUK

The manufacturing sector can access sector specific support at MadeUK to include support to manufacturing businesses through the complex changes as the [UK leaves the EU](#) here.

EU Transition

Four crucial things your business must have ready by 31st December..

With just nine days until the transition period ends, businesses need to act swiftly to ensure they're ready and avoid costly disruptions come 1st January. [Business Lincolnshire](#)'s has compiled a handy list of everything businesses need to prepare:-

- Who will be completing your customs declarations in January?
- Do your suppliers' workforces all have settled status?
- Is your wooden packaging ISPM15 compliant?
- Are your Incoterms up-to-date?

Need additional support?

Whether you're worried about Incoterms, packaging, settled status or more, call **01522 846946** or email exports@bizlincolnshire.com for expert advice and guidance. Alternatively, click [here](#) to see the complete package of EU exit support - fully-funded at no cost to your business!

Over the Christmas period you can still find out what actions may need to take by using the checker tool at gov.uk/transition and keep up to date with regular [business readiness bulletins](#) too.

See tools & webinars below to access specific topics.

Skills & Education

Staggered rollout of coronavirus testing for secondary schools and colleges

Testing has been offered to schools and colleges to minimise cases and transmission of the virus with return of students after Christmas. The government has confirmed that all secondary schools and colleges in England will be able to test more of their staff and students in a round of free coronavirus testing from the first week of January. This will help to deliver the national priority to keep education open for all and help fight the spread of the virus, while keeping schools and colleges safe. Building on the incredible work schools and colleges have done to be Covid-secure, the round of testing will help to reassure students, parents and teachers about returning to school and college. Further info [here](#).

Greater Lincolnshire LEP Employment & Skills Project Officer Vacancy

An exciting job vacancy has arisen within the LEP. This is a brand new role and the successful candidate will be managing a number of different projects, including some of the funding contracts that the LEP hold with external organisations. The closing date is 18 January 2021. Visit [here](#) to view the vacancy and for application details.

Tools, Webinars & Events

Visit the [GOV.UK](#) EU transition webinar page to find out more and register [here](#).

Businesses can keep up to date by watching relevant webinars to help prepare or can access sector-specific webinars [here](#).

- **The Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** is hosting a series of free podcasts to help businesses that make, use or supply chemicals. To listen to the podcast, just search 'The HSE Podcast' on your chosen platform. To receive notifications for each episode released, click [here](#).
- **UK Transition Period:** HSE and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) will be hosting a webinar on Wednesday 20 January at 10am. To register, and for more information, click [here](#).
- **HMRC customs declarations webinars:** HMRC have launched multiple editions of this live webinar covering how to complete customs import declarations and explaining how to make import declarations when importing goods between the EU and Great Britain. To register and find a date, click [here](#).
- **HMRC webinars:** Get help on UK transition with online webinars from HMRC by registering for webinars on importing using staged controls and how to prepare to use them and exporting and actions needed to prepare for 1 January 2021
- **Trading with the EU:** A video series has been released that explains what businesses need to do to be ready for 1 January 2021. These videos cover what businesses need to know about exports and imports, customs, commodity codes and controlled goods. To view the videos, click [here](#).

To register, and for more information. click [here](#).

Fixed Key Messaging

- **HANDS FACE SPACE**
- Approved vaccines are safe and prevent the spread of infectious diseases
- Visit [Business Lincolnshire](#) for continued support to your business
- Call the Covid helpline on 01522 782189 and select option 2 for business queries
- Feed business impacts into [Business Intelligence](#)

The Lincolnshire Resilience Forum has created a Recovery Comms Cell made up of county and district councils, NHS, and LEP/ Business Lincolnshire leads to ensure consistency of key messaging. This is not intended as a comprehensive list but to update on new and key messages relevant to economic response and recovery. Follow and tag @ [twitter LRF](#) [twitter LEP](#) [twitter Business Lincolnshire](#)

CONTACT THE TEAM – IF YOU NEED ANY HELP OR ASSISTANCE PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM						
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