



LRF Communications Briefing – Covid19

10 March 2021

LRFBIZ V53 - ECONOMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY VERSION

Coronavirus Headlines

Vaccine resilience against new COVID-19 variants

The NHS is working hard to ensure that the vaccine portfolio is resilient to new variants. Both the Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines are safe and effective against the COVID-19 variants currently dominant in the UK.

To reduce transmission it remains important that the public follow the current guidance of 'Hands, Face, Space' alongside current lockdown restrictions by limiting interaction with other people.

The number of people vaccinated continues to rise rapidly and we expect the protection conferred by vaccines to help reduce prevalence over time even as restrictions are eased.

Business and Economic Updates

Greater Lincolnshire LEP Response to the Budget 2021

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP has published its comments on last week's budget from the Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak, which includes welcome response to the successful Humber Freeport bid and Towns Deals Fund allocation. Read more [here](#).

Budget 2021 overview: Protecting the jobs and livelihoods of the British people

The government has published a budget aimed at protecting the jobs and livelihoods of the British people through the COVID-19 pandemic and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will have a key role to play in delivering this commitment.

The budget builds on government's existing support, bringing total support for the economy to £407 billion this year and next year - the largest peacetime economic support package on record. Further information can be found [here](#).

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP, presented his [Budget](#) to Parliament on Wednesday 3 March 2021 around a three-point plan to protect jobs and strengthen public finances.

Just some of the [measures announced](#) in the Budget include:

- An [extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) to September 2021 across the UK.
- An extension of the UK-wide [Self Employment Income Support scheme](#) to September 2021.
- **£5 billion for new Restart Grants** - a one off cash grant of up to £18,000 for hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care, and gym businesses in England.

- A new UK-wide [Recovery Loan Scheme](#) and an [extension to the VAT cut](#) to 5%, for hospitality, accommodation and attractions across the UK until the end of September.
- An extension to the temporary cut in Stamp Duty Land Tax in England and Northern Ireland alongside a new [mortgage guarantee scheme](#).
- Extension of the apprenticeship hiring incentive in England to September 2021, and £7 million for a new “flexi-job” apprenticeship programme in England.
- Additional £126 million for 40,000 more traineeships in England.
- Small and medium-sized employers in the UK will continue to be able to reclaim up to two weeks of eligible Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) costs per employee from the Government.
- [Build Back Better: our plan for growth](#) sets out the Government’s plans to support growth through significant investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation, and to pursue growth that levels up every part of the UK, enables the transition to net zero, and supports our vision for Global Britain.

All Budget 2021 documents can be found [here](#).

COVID-19 key business schemes and grants

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme:

- The scheme has been extended until 30 September 2021. From 1 July 2021, the level of grant will be reduced each month and employers will be asked to contribute towards the cost of furloughed employees’ wages. Find out [more about the changes](#).
- [Claims](#) for furlough days in February 2021 must be made by 15 March 2021.
- [Guidance](#) has been updated with information about how employees can use their personal tax account to see if they were included in any December 2020 claims.

Update on Kickstart Scheme Grant:

- [Guidance](#) has been updated with information about what employers should spend the £1,500 funding for setup costs on and with information about what to do if a young person leaves the ir job placement early.

Self-Assessment Payments - Time to Pay:

- [Guidance](#) has been updated to show you can set up a Time to Pay arrangement online for amounts up to £30,000 up to 60 days after 31 January 2021 without having to contact HMRC.

Companies House to resume voluntary and compulsory strike off

Following a temporary pause, Companies House will resume strike off processes from 8 March 2021.

More information can be found [here](#).

Businesses encouraged to sign up for free rapid tests for regular workplace testing

All businesses in England, including those with fewer than 50 employees, are now able to sign up to the government’s free COVID-19 workplace testing programme. Businesses can register their interest by 31st March to access the initiative. Further information can be found [here](#).

Coronavirus: supporting the reopening of outdoor hospitality

Robert Jenrick, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, has sent a letter to local authorities regarding government measures to support hospitality businesses reopening safely. Jenrick intends to extend pavement licences for a further 12 months, making it easier and cheaper for pubs, restaurants and cafes to continue to make al fresco dining a reality with outside seating, tables and street stalls to serve food and drinks. View the letter [here](#). Further information on this story can be found [here](#).

EU Transition

Useful contacts

A list of government helplines for businesses has been published, organised by theme and key actions. To view this, click [here](#). Businesses in England should call 0800 998 1098.

For continuous information, support, advice, and all things business-related visit www.businesslincolnshire.com

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has set up new helplines to assist UK businesses with enquiries related to the end of the Transition Period.

The Business Support Helpline (0800 998 1098) can help businesses in England identify the actions they need to take. Businesses can also call HMRC's Customs and International Trade Helpline and speak to an adviser on 0300 322 9434 or get in touch by webchat or by emailing enquiries@businesssupporthelpline.org Information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/business-support-helpline> Webchat: https://secure.livechatinc.com/licence/10701242/v2/open_chat.cgi?groups=0

Tools, Webinars & Events

Greater Lincolnshire Online Jobs and Careers Fair series

Greater Lincolnshire
Local Enterprise Partnership

ONLINE JOBS & CAREERS FAIR
March 25th, 2021

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE
ONLINE JOBS & CAREERS FAIR
HOSTED BY RUTH CARVER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP
25TH MARCH 2021, 10AM-1PM

Book your place at the next fair.
Employers are invited to book a **FREE** exhibition stand at a **virtual recruitment fair** reaching job seekers from across the Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland area.

Exhibitors can book and build their virtual booth at WWW.GREATERLINCJSJOBFAIR.CO.UK/REGISTER

▶ Click [here](#) for further information about the series of twelve Greater Lincolnshire-wide Jobs and Careers Fairs.

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ONLINE JOBS & CAREERS FAIR
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HOSTED BY RUTH CARVER
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25TH MARCH 2021

Hold the Date!
The next monthly Online Jobs and Careers Fair will take place on Thursday 25th March 2021. Join the live event from 10am-1pm.

To browse exhibitors, talk to employers, find out about training and much more visit WWW.GREATERLINCJSJOBFAIR.CO.UK

▶ Click [here](#) for further information about the series of twelve Greater Lincolnshire-wide Jobs and Careers Fairs.

The next Online Jobs Fair will take place on **Thursday 25th March 2021, 10am-1pm** and will be hosted by Ruth Carver who will deliver the event's welcome talk. Visitors can attend the virtual fair for free by going to www.greaterlincsjobsfair.co.uk.

Employers, Greater Lincolnshire training providers, and support services are welcome to register as exhibitors **free of charge** [here](#).

For support and advice, please go to the [website](#) or contact jobsfair@lincolnshire.gov.uk if you require help setting up a virtual stand.

The Online Jobs and Careers Fair is always looking out for new exhibitors!

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP would strongly appreciate local and regional businesses or organisations **sharing the above flyers with their networks**. Social media resources for exhibitors and visitors are all available to download from the Jobs Fair [website](#).

Government-backed webinar: Your Business Journey to Net Zero

A virtual event focusing on practical solutions for Northern Powerhouse based SMEs to help achieve their low-carbon goals will be live on Friday 19th March, from 9.40am to 4.20pm.

The event will feature talks from the Minister for Climate Change and Corporate Responsibility, Lord Callanan, as well as the government's Net Zero business champion, Andrew Griffith MP. Calling all small businesses based in the North of England. Limited places are available - register [here](#).

Lincoln International Business School's Resilient Lincolnshire project

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP is supporting the Resilient Lincolnshire project, to include a series of resilient leadership master classes running across March. These masterclasses have proven popular, with a large number of local organisations signing up; these organisations will be key to the development of support the Lincolnshire Business school can offer these leaders.

- Wed 11th March 1-4pm, The 'Emotional Leadership' Masterclasses
- Wed 18th March 1-4pm, The 'Responsible Leadership' Masterclass
- Wed 25th March 1-4pm, The 'Innovative Leadership via Technology' Masterclass

Click [here](#) for more information. Click [here](#) to register if you wish to be involved.

Eventbrite link: <https://lncn.ac/mcregister>

Upcoming events

- **South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone webinar** - 17th March 2021, 12pm-1pm. Click [here](#) for more information.
- **ChamberConnect Post Budget Employment Support webinar** - 23rd March 2021, 2pm-3pm. Click [here](#) for more information.
- **Paid Ads on Search & Display - Google class** - 24th March 2021, 10am-11.30am. Click [here](#) for more information.

To discover more upcoming events, webinars, and online courses, click [here](#) to visit the Business Lincolnshire calendar. All [gov.uk](#) webinars and videos for organisations that trade with the EU can be found [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 on Twitter @ [LRF](#) @[GreaterLincsLEP](#) @[businesslincs](#)

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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