



COVID-19 DAILY UPDATE 25/03/2020

We want to provide our partners with a daily COVID-19 update.

Last night and today further actions have been announced:

- The Prime Minister confirmed there would be an update tomorrow for those who are self-employed.
- Government have released expanded business retail discount business rates [guidance](#). Estate agents, lettings agencies and bingo halls that have closed as a result of Covid-19 measures to restrict the spread of the virus will now be exempted from business rates in 2020-21.
- BIDs will be able to extend the maximum duration of their BID arrangements until 31 March 2021 by delaying BID ballots due to take place this year. This enables BIDs, and the local authorities who administer the ballot process, to concentrate on responding to the current emergency.
- Companies to receive 3-month extension period to file accounts during COVID-19.
- The government are looking to identify, develop and demonstrate [rapid sanitising technologies](#). Innovations must be suitable for rapid deployment to clean public sector vehicles following the transport of patients with the COVID-19 virus.
- Government have released new guidance: [How to place a Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) test kit on the market](#)
- More detailed [staying at home guidance](#) has been released.
- Where hotels, hostels, and B&Bs are providing rooms to support homeless people, through arrangements with local authorities and other public bodies, they should remain open.

Rooms may also be provided to frontline homelessness workers who are included in the key worker category.

Cheshire and Warrington Updates

- The LEP is working closely with local authorities and government.
- A one page flyer is being sent from the LEP and Growth Hub outlining the support available to businesses, with information about support available. This is in partnership with the three local authorities. It will be posted and sent electronically and will be shared when available.
- A [survey](#) has been created to gather business intelligence. So far we've received 320 responses.
- Updates are on the Growth Hub [website](#), being updated daily.
- The Growth Hub are also sending regular newsletters, which can be [signed up to here](#).
- Marketing Cheshire have created a [guide](#) for their members and the wider retail, leisure, hospitality and tourism sector businesses.
- DWP and MHCLG have released some information on the ESF and ERDF projects, summarised here:

With the current circumstances, both MHCLG and DWP have taken the decision to defer the ERDF & unpublished ESF Reserve Fund calls that were due to launch in the coming months. This decision will allow our partners and our teams to focus on the immediate tasks to respond to COVID-19 and to review the focus of the ERDF & ESF Reserve Funds in line with emerging priorities.

For ERDF, we recognise that a number of partners have been preparing applications, and this work will not be lost. We intend to work across Government and with our partners to redesign the Reserve Fund to enable ERDF to support businesses to recover and grow once the current crisis subsides – ready for project activity from 2021.

For ESF, we recognise that there are still a number of proposals awaiting appraisal and the Managing Authority and its Appraisal Team will be in contact with the relevant parties in due course to discuss those proposals in more detail. Live calls will continue. As with ERDF, we will be working across Government and with our partners to redesign the Reserve Fund so that we can support society in key areas once the crisis subsides.

- Further information available through the website.

Useful Links

- <http://candwgrowthhub.co.uk/covid-19/>
- www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response
- <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support/>

