

Chancellor extends furlough scheme to end of June

- move will allow firms from across UK to continue to protect millions of jobs
- scheme will continue to be monitored to ensure people and businesses can get back to work as soon as it's safe to do so to drive UK economic recovery

The government's unprecedented furlough scheme that is keeping millions of people in jobs will be extended for a further month, the Chancellor confirmed today.

Following on from yesterday's announcement to keep the social distancing measures in place, Rishi Sunak said the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) would now be open until the end of June – providing businesses with the certainty they need.

The scheme, which allows firms to furlough employees with the government paying cash grants of 80% of their wages up to a maximum of £2,500, was originally open for three months and backdated from the 1 March to the end of May.

However, the Chancellor said he would keep the scheme under review and extend it if necessary.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, said:

We've taken unprecedented action to support jobs and businesses through this period of uncertainty, including the UK-wide Job Retention Scheme. With the extension of the coronavirus lockdown measures yesterday, it is the right decision to extend the furlough scheme for a month to the end of June to provide clarity.

It is vital for people's livelihoods that the UK economy gets up and running again when it is safe to do so, and I will continue to review the scheme so it is supporting our recovery.

The government has taken unprecedented action to help the economy and society bridge a period of national emergency so that as many people as possible can get back to work as the situation improves.

This week the Office for Budgetary Responsibility said the CJRS is limiting the impact on employment. Brewdog and Timpsons are among the thousands of businesses up and down the country furloughing their staff.

Future decisions on the scheme will take into account further developments on the wider measures to reduce the spread of coronavirus, as well as the

responsible management of the public finances.