

# Plan for Jobs: Chancellor increases financial support for businesses and workers

- open businesses which are experiencing considerable difficulty will be given extra help to keep staff on as government significantly increases contribution to wage costs under the Job Support Scheme, and business contributions drop to 5%
- business grants are expanded to cover businesses in particularly affected sectors in high-alert level areas, helping them stay afloat and protecting jobs
- grants for the self-employed doubled to 40% of previous earnings

In recognition of the challenging times ahead, the Chancellor said he would be increasing support through the existing Job Support and self-employed schemes, and expanding business grants to support companies in high-alert level areas.

This builds on agreements reached with Local Authorities moving to Alert Level very high, with extra support for businesses, jobs and the economic recovery.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

I've always said that we must be ready to adapt our financial support as the situation evolves, and that is what we are doing today. These changes mean that our support will reach many more people and protect many more jobs.

I know that the introduction of further restrictions has left many people worried for themselves, their families and communities. I hope the government's stepped-up support can be part of the country pulling together in the coming months.

## **Job Support Scheme (JSS)**

Recognising the pressure businesses in some sectors and areas are facing, today's announcement lightens the burden of keeping on staff.

When originally announced, the JSS – which will come into effect on 1 November – saw employers paying a third of their employees' wages for hours not worked, and required employers to be working 33% of their normal hours.

Today's announcement reduces the employer contribution to those unworked hours to just 5%, and reduces the minimum hours requirements to 20%, so those working just one day a week will be eligible. That means that if someone was being paid £587 for their unworked hours, the government would be

contributing £543 and their employer only £44.

Employers will continue to receive the £1,000 Job Retention Bonus. The Job Support Scheme Closed for businesses legally required to close remains unchanged.

### **Self-employed grant**

Today's announcement increases the amount of profits covered by the two forthcoming self-employed grants from 20 per cent to 40 per cent, meaning the maximum grant will increase from £1,875 to £3,750.

This is a potential further £3.1 billion of support to the self-employed through November to January alone, with a further grant to follow covering February to April.

### **Business Grants**

The Chancellor has also announced approved additional funding to support cash grants of up to £2,100 per month primarily for businesses in the hospitality, accommodation and leisure sector who may be adversely impacted by the restrictions in high-alert level areas. These grants will be available retrospectively for areas who have already been subject to restrictions, and come on top of higher levels of additional business support for Local Authorities moving into Tier 3 which, if scaled up across the country, would be worth more than £1 billion.

These grants could benefit around 150,000 businesses in England, including hotels, restaurants, B&Bs and many more who aren't legally required to close but have been adversely affected by local restrictions nonetheless.

### **Further information**

#### **Job Support Scheme – open**

- The JSS starts to operate from 1 November and covers all Nations of the UK. For every hour not worked, the employee will be paid up to two-thirds of their usual salary.
- The government will provide up to 61.67% of wages for hours not worked, up to £1541.75 per month (more than doubling the maximum payment of £697.92 under the previous rules). The cap is set above median earnings for employees in August at a reference salary of £3,125 per month.
- Example: a typical full-time employee in the hospitality industry is paid an average of £1,100 per month. Under the Jobs Support Scheme for open businesses, they will still take home at least £807 a month. All the employer needs to pay is a total of £283 a month or just £70 a week; the government will pay the rest.
- Employers using the scheme will also be able to claim the Job Retention Bonus (JRB) for each employee that meets the eligibility criteria of the JRB. This is worth £1,000 per employee. Taking JSS-Open and JRB together, an employer could receive over 95% of the total wage costs of their employees if they are retained until February.

## **Self Employed**

- The government will provide two taxable SEISS grants to support those experiencing reduced demand due to COVID-19 but are continuing to trade, or temporarily cannot trade.
- It will be available to anyone who was previously eligible for the SEISS grant one and grant two, and meets the eligibility criteria.
- Grants will be paid in two lump sum instalments each covering 3 months. The first grant will cover a three-month period from the start of November 2020 until the end of January 2021. The government will pay a taxable grant which is calculated based on 40% of three months' average trading profits, paid out in a single instalment and capped at £3,750.
- The second grant will cover a three-month period from the start of February until the end of April 2021. The government will review the level of the second grant and set this in due course.

## **Business Grants**

- We are providing additional funding to allow Local Authorities (LAs) to support businesses in high-alert level areas which are not legally closed, but which are severely impacted by the restrictions on socialising. The funding LAs will receive will be based on the number of hospitality, hotel, B&B, and leisure businesses in their area.
  - LAs will receive a funding amount that will be the equivalent of:
  - For properties with a rateable value of £15,000 or under, grants of £934 per month.
  - For properties with a rateable value of between £15,000-£51,000, grants of £1,400 per month.
  - For properties with a rateable value of £51,000, grants of £2,100 per month.
  - This is equivalent to 70% of the grant amounts given to legally closed businesses (worth up to £3,000/month).
  - Local Authorities will also receive a 5% top up amount to these implied grant amounts to cover other businesses that might be affected by the local restrictions, but which do not neatly fit into these categories.
  - It will be up to Local Authorities to determine which businesses are eligible for grant funding in their local areas, and what precise funding to allocate to each business – the above levels are an approximate guide.
  - Businesses in Very High alert level areas will qualify for greater support whether closed (up to £3,000/month) or open. In the latter case support is being provided through business support packages provided to Local Authorities as they move into the alert level. The government is working with local leaders to ensure the Alert Level very high packages are fair and transparent.
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# Lebanon Civil Society Human Rights Monitoring Tender

World news story

UK's Conflict Stability and Security fund in Lebanon invites tender for Civil Society Human Rights monitoring.



UK-Lebanon

Application process for Lebanon Civil Society Human Rights monitoring tender.

Deadline: 18:00 on Wednesday 11 November 2020. Extensions/late submissions will not be possible. Interested organisations, meeting the criteria as per the attached (tender), must submit the following documents within the deadline.

1. Completed narrative application template (attached).
2. Financial bid submitted in the activity based budget template (attached).
3. Evidence they met the requirements stated in the tender documents.
4. Proof of organisational registration.

Completed applications need to be submitted by email to: [cssf.beirut@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:cssf.beirut@fcdo.gov.uk) before 18:00 on Wednesday 11 November 2020.

NOTE: Applicants who do not submit all documents, within the deadline, or do not submit a plan within the financial parameters will not be scored or shortlisted. From the date of publication of this tender, the embassy will not be responding to questions on the specifics of their existing, or potential, support to civil society organisations in general. All of these processes will operate in accordance with the rules and regulations determined by the CSSF.

Published 22 October 2020

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# Lift-off for Shetland spaceport

Hundreds of space jobs will be created in Scotland following the approval of plans for Lockheed Martin to transfer its satellite launch operations to Shetland Space Centre by the UK government.

Shetland Space Centre anticipates that by 2024, the spaceport site could support a total of 605 jobs in Scotland including 140 locally and 210 across the wider Shetland region. A further 150 jobs will also be created through manufacturing and support services.

Following a thorough process of due diligence, the UK Space Agency has confirmed that Lockheed Martin's plans to move its UK Pathfinder Launch to the Shetland site at Lamba Ness on Unst would continue to deliver long-term value and help establish a sustainable, commercial launch market as part of the UK's spaceflight programme – LaunchUK.

Lockheed Martin is in discussions with a preferred partner to provide launch services for its UK Pathfinder Launch, which would take place from Shetland Space Centre.

UK Government Minister for Scotland, Iain Stewart, said:

The UK Government is committed to cementing the UK's position as a global leader in the space sector. The creation of the Shetland Space Centre is incredibly exciting news and a real boost for the local economy.

Our investment in Scottish spaceports is creating hundreds of secure and skilled jobs for people in Scotland.

The Shetland Space Centre a huge step forward for our ambitious UK Spaceflight programme.

UK Government Science Minister, Amanda Solloway, said:

We want the UK to be the best place in Europe to launch satellites, attracting innovative businesses from all over the world and creating hundreds of high-skilled jobs.

The potential to have multiple spaceports in Scotland demonstrates the scale of our ambition, and I want to support industry by pressing ahead with our plans during this challenging time.

This government is committed to backing our growing space sector, developing a comprehensive space strategy and supporting

transformative technologies that will benefit people and businesses across the country.

Just as an airport can handle a range of different airlines and aircraft, Space Hub Sutherland has been designed as a multi-user site able to cater for the needs of multiple launch providers. This ensures it will be able to continue to compete for a wide range of exciting vertical launch opportunities.

The UK Space Agency will also continue to fully support Space Hub Sutherland through grant funding to Highlands and Islands Enterprise to develop the spaceport infrastructure and to UK-based launch partner, Orbex, to prepare its innovative Prime rocket to launch from the site in 2022.

An economic assessment of the Spaceport Sutherland site reported in 2019 that the site is due to create over 60 high-skilled jobs in Sutherland and Caithness, and 250 jobs in the wider area.

Ivan McKee, Scottish Government Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation said:

This is an extremely exciting time for the emerging space sector globally, and Scotland is situated at the very forefront of this.

The transfer of Lockheed Martin's UK pathfinder satellite launch to Shetland Space Centre will enhance Scotland's existing vertical launch capability and enable us to target a wider market base through a complementary offer across multiple spaceports.

This will provide an economic boost not only to the Shetland Isles but also maximise the commercial opportunity across the wider region, with Highlands and Islands Enterprise leading the delivery of Space Hub Sutherland alongside Scottish-based launch partner, Orbex.

Developing domestic spaceflight capabilities will play a key role in levelling up the UK economy, driving investment, fostering growth and creating new jobs.

Scotland is already home to some of the world's most innovative satellite manufacturers, and its ability to host complementary launch sites puts the UK firmly on the map as Europe's leading small satellite launch destination.

The economic benefits will be shared across the Highlands and Islands region and both Space Hub Sutherland and Shetland Space Centre have already attracted significant commercial interest in their plans. In 2019, Orbex opened a rocket design and manufacturing facility in Forres, near Inverness, which is anticipated to bring 130 highly-skilled jobs to the region.

Nik Smith, UK Country Executive at Lockheed Martin said:

The UK has a vibrant space sector, which can stimulate the national as well as regional economies. As a long-standing strategic partner to the UK, Lockheed Martin is committed to building on its proud heritage to support the UK government's role of growing capabilities in space, exciting imagination and advancing the frontiers of science.

From the outset our focus has been on realising the greatest economic benefit for the UK through the Spaceflight programme. The transfer of our UK spaceflight operations to Shetland will not only broaden launch options available in the UK, but also ensure the economic benefits of these endeavours are felt more widely.

Space has a significant role to play in generating economic growth, creating high-skilled jobs and tackling global challenges, from climate change to the spread of infectious diseases. The ability to launch small satellites for Earth observation and communications will boost UK efforts to tackle these challenges by providing valuable tools and data that can help analyse and predict impacts and support effective decisions and mitigation strategies.

The UK's spaceflight programme – LaunchUK – is working with a range of additional partners to establish commercial vertical and horizontal small satellite launch from UK spaceports including Spaceport Cornwall and Virgin Orbit.

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## [Media correction: Passenger train derailment near Carmont](#)

News story

Correction published by RAIL.



RAIB logo

# **RAIL – ‘Excavations to push Carmont reopening back to November’**

## **Background**

RAIL issue 915 contained an article about the timing of the reopening of the line following the derailment at Carmont.

## **The article**

The article commenced: ‘Trains may not start running through Carmont until November after the Rail Accident Investigation Branch asked Network Rail to excavate and remove the drainage catchpits alongside the line to allow further inspection.’ The article went on to quote a Network Rail source explaining why RAIB’s action was leading to delay.

## **Action taken**

RAIB explained that the article was incorrect to both the journalist and Network Rail.

## **Outcome**

RAIL published the following correction as part of a related article in issue 916.

The removal of the catchpits (which sit between sections of drain and permit access for drain cleaning) came at the request of Police Scotland, according to Network Rail spokesman Kevin Groves, and not the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (as RAIL 915 reported).

Published 22 October 2020

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## **OSCE mission to Moldova: UK statement**

Thank you Chair. I join other speakers in welcoming Ambassador Neukirch to the Permanent Council and thanking him for his report.

The United Kingdom continues to support a peaceful, comprehensive and lasting settlement to the Transnistrian conflict on the basis of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova, within its internationally recognised borders, and with a special status for Transnistria.



As Ambassador Neukirch's report makes clear, the period since his last report to this Council in April has been marked by a number of challenges including, but not limited to, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The United Kingdom thanks Ambassador Neukirch for the energy and creativity he has shown in leading the Mission in the face of these challenges. We note, for example, the very active Mission presence in the Security Zone during this period. This has enabled the Mission to observe at first hand the impact of the unilateral establishment of additional checkpoints by the de facto Transnistrian authorities, without reference to any prior discussion at the Joint Control Commission (JCC).

The United Kingdom reiterates its view that these checkpoints should be removed with immediate effect, and that all such matters should be brought to the JCC for proper discussion in future, in line with the Cease-fire Agreement of 1992.

We are grateful to Ambassador Neukirch for highlighting worrying developments with regard to human rights in recent months, in particular since the adoption of a new Extremism Strategy by the de facto authorities in Transnistria in March. The manner in which this Strategy defines extremism does not meet internationally accepted standards.

Following its adoption, the Strategy appears to have been used as the basis for a series of actions by the de facto authorities designed to limit freedom of expression and association by citizens of the Transnistrian region. The United Kingdom has called on the de facto authorities in Transnistria to reconsider their approach.

The arrest of four Moldovan citizens on 8 October at Camenca, in connection with a long running criminal matter, is well documented in this report. We commend Ambassador Neukirch for the agile manner in which he has sought to intervene, in his role as mediator, in order to encourage both sides to ensure respect for the rule of law and the human rights of all those involved. The United Kingdom continues to follow this and other human rights issues with concern.

The United Kingdom has regularly expressed its concern at the ongoing presence on the territory of the Republic of Moldova of the Operational Group of Russian Forces (OGRF). We repeat that concern today, noting that no progress has been made towards the OGRF's orderly withdrawal. We also take this opportunity to repeat our call on the Russian Federation to include the OSCE in the process of removal and destruction of ammunition from Transnistria, in accordance with the 1999 Istanbul Declaration and subsequent extension of the mandate of the Mission to Moldova.

The appalling explosion at the Port of Beirut on 4 August reminds us of the urgency of this matter. We note the Russian Federation's position that withdrawal will take place when conditions are right. Given the danger that old ammunition represents to citizens in the region, we invite the Russian Federation to clarify, as a matter of urgency, what would constitute the "right conditions".

COVID-19, freedom of movement and other human rights challenges have occupied the Mission and the parties to a large extent in the period since the last report by Ambassador Neukirch. The United Kingdom urges both parties and all participants in the 5+2 Process to now redouble efforts to find the necessary solutions which can deliver on all outstanding Confidence Building Measures as a matter of priority.

As we mark the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security this week, I would also be interested to hear from Ambassador Neukirch more about how his Mission mainstreams a gender perspective into their support to the working groups of the 5+2 process.