

Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Djibouti

Press release

Ms Jo McPhail has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Djibouti.



Ms Jo McPhail has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Djibouti, as we open our new resident Embassy in Djibouti. She will succeed the current, non-resident Ambassador, Dr Alastair McPhail CMG OBE, who will remain Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Ms McPhail will take up her appointment during October 2020.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Pamela Joanne McPhail

Married to: Dr Alastair McPhail

Children: Two sons

2020 FC0, Silver Operations Manager, Covid-19 Crisis Repatriations Cell

2018 – 2020 FC0, Head of Talent, Performance (Diversity) and Leadership, Human Resources Directorate

2017 – 2018 Cabinet Office, Head of Business and Performance, Civil Service Group

2014 – 2017 FC0, Head of Engagement and Learning, Knowledge and Technology Directorate

2010 – 2014 FC0, Head of Overseas Passport Management Unit, Consular Directorate

2009 – 2010 The Hague, First Secretary, Head of Political and Communications Teams

2008 – 2009 FC0, Project Manager, Global Out of Hours Programme, Consular Directorate

2008 Banjul, Acting British High Commissioner

2006 – 2007 FCO, Head of Nigeria and Central Africa Team, Africa Directorate
2004 – 2005 FCO, Change Manager, Organisation Project
2002 – 2004 FCO, Head of Workforce Planning, Human Resources Directorate
2000 – FCO, Deputy Head of Peacekeeping (lead on Africa), UN Department,
2002 Global Issues Directorate
1997 – 1998 Ankara, Community Liaison Officer
1995 – 1996 FCO, Project Officer – Personnel Policy and Manpower Planning,
Personnel Policy Unit
1992 – 1994 Moscow, Third later First Secretary – Press & Public Affairs
1990 – 1992 FCO, Desk Officer, Narcotics Control and AIDS Department

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For journalists

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Published 30 July 2020

[Statistical press release: Digest of UK Energy Statistics 2020](#)

Press release

Statistical press release to announce the publication of the 2020 edition of the Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics (DUKES) and 2 other publications.



The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy today (30 July 2020) releases 3 key statistical publications:

These provide a detailed analysis of production, transformation and consumption of energy in 2019.

PDF, 371KB, 8 pages

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Published 30 July 2020

[£20 million in new grants to boost recovery of small businesses](#)

Press release

£20 million new funding to help smaller businesses recover from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic.



- Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government announces £20 million new funding to help businesses across England get back on track.
- Small and medium sized businesses in England can access grants between £1,000 – £5,000 for new equipment and technology and specialist advice
- Minister confirms new support while visiting businesses and local leaders across Cornwall

Thousands of smaller businesses in England are set to benefit from £20

million of new government funding to help them recover from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, the Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government has today (30 July 2020) announced.

Small and medium sized businesses will have access to grants of between £1,000 – £5,000 to help them access new technology and other equipment as well as professional, legal, financial or other advice to help them get back on track.

It comes on top of an unprecedented package of Government support to help businesses to recover, including the £2 billion Kickstart Scheme which will create hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people across the country, as well as £1.6 billion invested in scaling up employment support schemes, training and apprenticeships to help people looking for a job.

Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government, Simon Clarke MP said:

We have always said that we would stand behind our businesses and communities as we rebuild following the coronavirus pandemic. This new funding does exactly that.

Businesses will be able to use these new grants to pay for the expertise, equipment and technology they need to adapt, recover and rebuild.

Small and medium sized businesses are the beating heart of communities; they provide employment and contribute significantly to local economies and we are determined to give them the support they need to continue to thrive.

Today's announcement builds on a £10 million package announced by the Minister earlier this month to help to kickstart the tourism industry and support the visitor economy.

The support will be fully funded by the government from the England European Regional Development Fund and distributed through Growth Hubs, embedded in local areas across England.

- The support will be fully funded by the Government with no obligation for businesses to contribute financially.
- The funding being provided to businesses is supported by the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is the Managing Authority for the European Regional Development Fund in England. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-2014-to-2020-european-structural-an>

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- The funding has been allocated to Growth Hubs within each LEP area in line with the current ERDF Programme.

View [Growth Hub funding: allocations for each LEP area](#) (PDF, 202KB, 4 pages)

- To establish a viable grant programme, we have set a minimum of £250,000 for all LEP areas. The allocation of resources will be reviewed as the grant fund is delivered.
- Growth Hubs work across the country with local and national, public and private sector partners – such as Chambers of Commerce, FSB, universities, Enterprise Zones and banks, co-ordinating local business support and connecting businesses to the right help for their needs. They are locally driven, locally owned and at the heart of the government's plan to ensure business support is simpler, more joined up and easier to access.
- Activities supported through the £20 million can include:
 - One-to-many events providing guidance to respond to coronavirus,
 - Grants (£1,000 – £5,000) to help businesses access specialist professional advice such as HR, accountants, legal, financial, IT and digital, and to purchase minor equipment to adapt or adopt new technology in order to continue to deliver business activity or diversify.

Published 30 July 2020

[More businesses set to benefit from government loan scheme](#)

- government expects lenders to make changes in approvals processes
- over 57,000 businesses have benefitted from £12.6 billion of support through CBILS to date

Changes to state aid rules as a result of UK Government and industry lobbying

mean that more small businesses can now benefit from loans of up to £5 million under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), it was announced today (30th July 2020).

Previously businesses which were classed as 'undertakings in difficulty' were unable to access CBILS because of EU rules. From today, businesses in this category and which have fewer than 50 employees and a turnover of less than £9 million can apply to CBILS.

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury and the Small Business Minister have written to accredited lenders setting out their expectation that these changes will be implemented to ensure more businesses are receiving support.

Undertakings in difficulty are usually businesses with high levels of debt and accumulated losses.

The UK Government and industry groups have lobbied to relax the restrictive rules in the European Temporary State Aid Framework to make sure that small businesses who are not insolvent or receiving rescue aid can benefit, enabling them to bounce back and kickstart our economy.

Economic Secretary to the Treasury, John Glen, said: > Our loan schemes have been a key part in supporting businesses enabling them to bounce back as we kick start the economy. > > I'm delighted that our work with the Commission has paid off so we can further support the smallest businesses.

Small Business Minister, Paul Scully, said:

We have stood by business throughout this crisis, and today's announcement will mean that even more small firms will be able to access much-needed financial support.

Small businesses will play a vital role as we seek to recover our way of life and get the economy moving again, and it is essential we continue to support them through this difficult period.

Businesses have benefitted from £50 billion of government-backed support with over 57,000 firms drawing from CBILS to date. This is alongside other measures in the government's comprehensive package of support including the furlough scheme, over £10 billion of grants and generous tax deferrals.

Throughout the pandemic, the UK Government has acted with speed and at scale to protect lives and safeguard jobs.

In the first phase of this crisis the government aimed to protect lives and safeguard jobs. The second phase will see the Chancellor's Plan for Jobs set in motion, which will see jobs created, supported and protected as the economy begins to reopen.

Chris Wilford, Head of Financial Services Policy, CBI said:

This is an important step that will help more businesses get the critical support they need. These eligibility hurdles have been a real stumbling block for many firms across the UK throughout the crisis. These were put in place to avoid governments bailing out failing companies, but those rules were established in normal times.

They have had a real impact on the ability of some high-growth firms and those with more complex structures being able to access the loan schemes. More jobs and livelihoods will be now be saved. The CBI will continue to work with government on further measures for firms of all sizes.

Michael Moore, Director General, BVCA, said:

The BVCA welcomes the changes announced today as these will benefit many small businesses nationwide backed by private equity and venture capital. These businesses have strong growth prospects and it is right that the undertaking in difficulty definition was amended to take account of their value to the economy.

Notes

- lenders will also shortly be receiving guidance providing clarity on how to identify undertakings in difficulty, which will help viable larger businesses access support too.
- undertakings in difficulty are already eligible for Bounce Back Loans subject to de minimis State Aid limits

[Extra university places for vital courses announced](#)

Extra university places for engineering, science and nursing courses have been made available for September, the Universities Minister has announced today.

Michelle Donelan has confirmed that the Government has approved over 9,000 additional places at UK universities for courses that will deliver vital services, support the economy and generate positive outcomes for students and the taxpayer.

As part of the Government's aim to drive an increase in science and innovation and encourage STEM subject take-up, it has approved more than 1,300 extra university places for engineering courses, 756 places for bio-

sciences and almost 500 for maths courses.

A total of 5,611 places for healthcare courses have also been allocated at universities in England to support the NHS, with 3,803 of these additional places going to nursing courses.

Last month the Prime Minister stated that investing in skills is crucial to our economic recovery post-coronavirus.

Today's announcement will not only help thousands more people gain knowledge that will help them progress in life, but also to help rebuild Britain.

Universities Minister Michelle Donelan said:

The coronavirus will not stop us from boosting growth in vital subjects like science, engineering, and maths.

These courses not only deliver some of the best outcomes for students, they will also be integral to driving innovation, helping our public services and building the skills the country needs.

Bids for extra places were assessed on the quality of each provider, including their rates of continuation and graduate employment outcomes. In total there were 3,859 eligible bids from 38 providers for additional places on courses of strategic importance. All bids that met the set criteria have been accepted.

Bids for healthcare courses in England totalled 5,611 and the Department for Health and Social care have accepted all additional places.

The allocation of places announced today follows the introduction of temporary student number controls, in which institutions were given the opportunity to bid for 10,000 additional places – at least 5,000 for healthcare courses and 5,000 for courses of strategic importance.