



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Response by the Portfolio Holder:

Businesses

New schemes have been put in place by the UK Government and we have over the last week made the necessary arrangements to administer these schemes which for Powys businesses are estimated to be around £61m.

- This includes a £10,000 grant to all businesses eligible for Small Business Rates Relief with a rateable value of £12,000 or less.
- A grant of £25,000 will be given to businesses in the retail, leisure and hospitality sector with a rateable value of between £12,001 and £51,000.
- To provide further support, all retail, leisure and hospitality businesses in Powys with a rateable value of less than £500,000 will receive a year-long business rates holiday.

We are looking to make it as easy as possible for business to benefit from these arrangements and for some elements no action is required to draw on the schemes.

Rates bills for the new financial year 2020/21 have already been issued without the relief included, but those who are eligible will receive an updated bill shortly and direct debits will not be collected in the meantime.

From next week, commencing 30 March, we will be paying the grants directly into bank accounts of businesses where we have their bank details. There are a number of businesses whom we don't have bank account details for. We will write to each one at the same address we send the bill, asking for these details.

Council Tax

We are bound by legislation as to when we issue our Council Tax demands and appreciate that they are arriving with residents when many of them are concerned about the virus and how it will affect them and their family.

A considerable number of lower income households are already able to receive support from the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, this scheme is open to any person who is resident in Powys, pays Council Tax and meets the eligibility criteria. More may now qualify under this scheme.

The council has a team of officers who can offer confidential help and support around the various Coronavirus finance schemes being announced as well as helping them to find other reliefs, benefits or awards they may be entitled to. Officers also can help to find ways to help them manage money including ways to spread

payments including Council Tax or Business Rates bill, find better fuel options and also help manage debt.

New Phone Line

A new phone line offering financial support has been launched, the dedicated line will help local residents and businesses with a wide range of financial queries. The phone line 01597 826345 will be open every weekday from 9am until 4pm.

Information

The council's website is constantly being updated with the various schemes and support that can be offered and how to apply, and press releases are being made to promote awareness.