

Written 31 August 2021

## **BUSINESS NEWS SCOTLAND**

Welcome to our round up of the latest business and Covid-19 news for our clients. Please contact us if you want to talk about how these updates affect your business. We are here to support you!

### **The future for rural Scotland**

The next steps in reforming the agriculture sector in Scotland and supporting farmers and crofters to cut emissions and produce sustainable, high quality food were set out last week by the government.

Individuals representing land based businesses covering a range of farming, geographical and environmental interests have been appointed to a new board called the Agriculture Reform Implementation Oversight Board (ARIOB), co-chaired by the Cabinet Secretary and NFUS President Martin Kennedy.



It will help to develop new proposals for sustainable farming support by considering the Climate Change Plan Update and the Farmer-led Groups recommendations, alongside industry reports. The group will place farmers and crofters at the heart of a future support framework and help Scottish agriculture become more economically and environmentally sustainable.

Also published last week is a consultation building on the recommendations from the Farmer-led Groups. The paper sets out a number of key questions on the recommendations which are intended to inform wider work on the development of agricultural policy and the replacement to CAP.

See: [Delivering a new future for rural Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/delivering-a-new-future-for-rural-scotland/pages/1-100.aspx)

## **GDP estimates for June 2021**

Scotland's onshore GDP grew by 0.9% in June, according to statistics announced last week by the Chief Statistician. Output remains 2.1% below the pre-pandemic level in February 2020.

Services sector output grew by 1.2% in June, with increases in seven of the 14 subsectors. The largest contribution to growth was from accommodation and food services for the third month in a row as activity continued to pick up after the easing of restrictions.

Output in the production sector increased by 0.5% overall, with growth in the electricity and gas supply subsector offset by falls in manufacturing and water and waste management. Output in the construction sector is estimated to have fallen by 1.4%, broadly in line with the UK as a whole over the course of the latest quarter.

See: [GDP Monthly Estimate: June 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/gdp-monthly-estimate/june-2021/pages/1-to-3.aspx)

## **Touring fund for live music**

Musicians, bands, artists and venues will be able to apply to a £750,000 Scottish Government fund to bring new and additional concerts to venues and festivals in Scotland next year. Scotland on Tour will support the staging of concerts across the whole nation from between January 2022 and January 2023. Funded by Scottish Government and organised by Active Events, its decision making panel includes representatives from across the music industry, as well as Creative Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, XpoNorth and South of Scotland Enterprise. Participating artists, venues and festivals will be announced later this year.

See: [Scotland's music on tour - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-music-on-tour/pages/1-to-3.aspx)

## **New Green Jobs Workforce Academy**

A new advice service has been launched as ScottishPower announce 135 new green jobs in Scotland. People will be able to access information, advice and skills needed to thrive in a net-zero economy.

The new Green Jobs Workforce Academy, delivered by Skills Development Scotland, will help people take a greener approach to their careers, from accessing training and learning new skills, to finding a new green job.

See: [New Green Jobs Workforce Academy - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-green-jobs-workforce-academy/pages/1-to-3.aspx)

## **Help to Grow: Digital**

Help to Grow: Digital is a new UK-wide scheme to help small and medium size businesses (SMEs) adopt digital technologies that are proven to increase their productivity.

The scheme will offer SMEs free and impartial advice on how technology can help their business. An online platform will help them to:

- identify their digital technology needs
- assess technology purchasing options
- implement new technologies in their operations

The scheme will also offer eligible SMEs a [grant token](#) worth up to £5,000 to cover up to half of the costs of pre-approved, digital technology solutions.

The Help to Grow: Digital scheme will be launched in Autumn. It will run for 3 years, taking a phased approach over a number of waves. Each wave will provide the opportunity to roll out new technologies and functionalities for SMEs and vendors.

See: [Help to Grow: Digital – apply to become a vendor - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

### Reimbursing Fuel for Company cars from 1 September 2021

As the result of recent increases in petrol and diesel prices HMRC have increased the advisory fuel rates that apply for the reimbursement of employees' private fuel for their company cars. The same rates apply when the employer reimburses employees for fuel used for business journeys in their company car. Curiously the LPG reimbursement rates have reduced, which appears to be an anomaly.

The new rates apply from 1 September 2021, but you can continue to use the previous rates for up to 1 month from the date the new rates apply.

Where there has been a change the previous rate is shown in brackets: -

Engine Size	Petrol	Diesel	LPG
1400cc or less	12p (11p)		7p (8p)
1600cc or less		10p (9p)	
1401cc to 2000cc	14p (13p)		8p (9p)
1601 to 2000cc		12p (11p)	
Over 2000cc	20p (19p)	15p (13p)	12p (14p)

For hybrid cars you must use the petrol or diesel rate which may differ significantly from the actual fuel costs. The advisory electricity rate for fully electric cars is 4 pence per mile.

Employees should carefully consider whether it is advantageous having private fuel provided for their company car. Remember that the P11d benefit for having private fuel provided for a company car in 2021/22 is £24,600 multiplied by the CO2 emissions percentage for that vehicle.

Please contact us if you need help with any Benefits in Kind matters.

### **Upcycling Protective Plastics from Offshore Wind Farms**

KTN-iX™ (KTN-innovation eXchange) is a cross sector program supporting innovation transfer by matching industry challenges to innovative companies from other sectors. It does this through putting large businesses with technical needs in contact with companies who have the right innovative solutions, for faster development of novel solutions.

Ørsted is a renewable energy company that takes tangible action to create a world that runs entirely on green energy.

The iX challenge competition, delivered by KTN, is supporting Ørsted to identify innovative approaches for dealing with a significant and immediate challenge arising from a waste stream.

The challenge is looking for designers and innovators who would use this material for creative ideas such as materials for fashion, accessories, jewellery, footwear, coats, bags and others.

If you can turn the PVC into another product or craft such as covers, marquee/tent/outdoor product covers, or a charity that wants to make sustainable products from PVC then this challenge may be of interest.

The business(es) with the most promising solution(s), as selected by the challenge owner, may be given a commercial opportunity to deliver their solution and receive support from KTN and the wider Innovate UK network.

See: [Challenge | Upcycling Protective Plastics from Offshore Wind Farms | KTN-iX™ \(ktninnovationexchange.co.uk\)](https://ktninnovationexchange.co.uk)

### **Call for Research Engagement from Micro & SME Designers & Manufacturers**

Future Fashion Factory is looking for fashion and textiles designers (and particularly those outside of London) to participate in research on the different types of support that micro and small businesses need.

For further information see: [Call for Research Engagement from Micro & SME Designers & Manufacturers \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com)

## **Business growth scheme open to next group of space entrepreneurs**

The Leo Programme is a bespoke, one to one accelerator for high-growth and high potential entrepreneurs. Twenty businesses will be supported on the next phase of the Leo Programme, a free six-month accelerator run by the UK Space Agency and powered by Entrepreneurial Spark, where they will get access to tailored, specialist online and in-person support from space industry and business growth experts. The programme is open to businesses already in the space sector and those already exploring the possibilities presented by the industry. Firms working in a linked industry looking for a route into the space sector can also apply. The closing date to apply is 10 September 2021.

See: [Space Accelerator — Entrepreneurial Spark \(entrepreneurial-spark.com\)](https://entrepreneurial-spark.com)

## **COVID-19 GOVERNMENT SUPPORT NEWS**

Below is our weekly roundup of changes to government support information generally and for businesses, employers and the self-employed.

### **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) – August claims**

Claims under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) are now open for pay periods in August 2021. You must submit your claim for August 2021 by 14 September 2021.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will be ending on 30 September 2021. Claims for September must be submitted by 14 October 2021 and any amendments must be made by 28 October 2021.

For further information please see: [Claim for wages through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/claim-for-wages-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme)

### **Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) - How to Work out your turnover so you can claim the fifth SEISS grant**

For the fifth grant you will need to tell HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) about your turnover if you traded in 2019 to 2020 as well as any of the following tax years:

- 2018 to 2019
- 2017 to 2018
- 2016 to 2017

Turnover includes the takings, fees, sales or money earned or received by your business.

Before you claim you must:

1. Work out your April 2020 to April 2021 turnover.

2. Find your turnover from either 2019 to 2020 or 2018 to 2019 to use as a reference year.

You will need to have both figures ready when you make your claim.

#### How to work out your April 2020 to April 2021 turnover

You need to work out your turnover for a 12-month period, starting on any date from 1 to 6 April 2020. You can use one of the following periods:

- 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
- 2 April 2020 to 1 April 2021
- 3 April 2020 to 2 April 2021
- 4 April 2020 to 3 April 2021
- 5 April 2020 to 4 April 2021
- 6 April 2020 to 5 April 2021

You should check that your figure is accurate. HMRC will be able to check your figures after you submit your tax return for this period. Your figure must include the turnover from all of your businesses. Please contact us if you need assistance in making the claim.

See more here: [Claim a grant through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-self-employment-income-support-scheme)

#### **Investing in the tourism sector**

A multi-million pound package of support has been invested to help tourism and hospitality businesses recover from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The package of support includes:

- £4 million for VisitScotland to deliver the Days Out scheme which will help support the tourism sector throughout the year
- £3 million for domestic marketing highlighting Scotland as an attractive year round destination
- £1.4 million for holiday vouchers for carers and low income families

More than 60 jobs, including 47 seasonal rangers, have also been funded to support rural areas cope with higher than usual visitor numbers due to the rise in staycations this summer.

See: [Investing in the tourism sector - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/news/2020/07/20/investing-in-the-tourism-sector/)

#### **Investment in North East workers**

More than £14 million will be invested to support North East based workers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Oil and Gas downturn. The funding will provide opportunities

for more than 3,000 individuals in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire through training and enterprise projects across a number of sectors, including entrepreneurship, tourism and energy transition. This includes a climate emergency training programme to help businesses transition towards net zero, and a scheme to support employers develop business plans to ensure long-term sustainable jobs.

See: [Investment in North East workers - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

### **Kickstart Scheme terms and conditions**

Kickstart Scheme terms and conditions for employers and gateways receiving the Kickstart Scheme grant from the Department for Work and Pensions have been updated effective from 23 August 2021. This version includes a new annex 'Annex 5: Proof of concept'.

See: [Kickstart Scheme terms and conditions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

### **Guidance for Companies House (CH) customers**

The cut off time for using a same day service to electronically file a change of company name or incorporate a company (software filing only) has changed from 11am to 3pm.

CXH has developed a service to [Upload a document to Companies House](#) instead of sending a paper document by post.

It also includes features such as acknowledgments and online payment using GOV.UK Pay. CH say they are continually working to improve this service and include more document types.

See: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for Companies House customers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

### **Companies House webinars**

Companies House webinars offer useful guidance covering a range of topics including:

- starting a limited company and your responsibilities to Companies House and HMRC
- how intellectual property such as patents, trademarks and copyrights can affect your business
- guidance on starting a community interest company (CIC)
- how to register company mortgages and other charges at Companies House
- how to restore a company to the register

See: [Companies House webinars - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

### **Private providers of coronavirus (COVID-19) testing**

The lists of and information about private providers who have self-declared that they meet the government's minimum standards for the type of commercial COVID-19 testing service they offer has been updated.

See: [Private providers of coronavirus \(COVID-19\) testing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/private-providers-of-coronavirus-testing)

### **Open letter to PCR Providers on compliance with consumer law**

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has published an open letter to providers of PCR tests on how they should comply with consumer law. This letter has also been sent to all providers listed on GOV.UK.

See: [Open letter to PCR Providers on compliance with consumer law - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/open-letter-to-pcr-providers)

### **Right to work checks**

The end date for the temporary adjusted checks has now been deferred to 5 April 2022 (inclusive). The government has made the decision to defer the date following the feedback they received about the ability to conduct checks remotely. The government initiated a review of the availability of specialist technology to support a system of digital right to work checks in the future. The intention is to introduce a new digital solution to include many who are unable to use the Home Office online checking service, including UK and Irish citizens. This will enable checks to continue to be conducted remotely but with enhanced security.

See: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): right to work checks - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-right-to-work-checks)

### **Canada and the Azores added to travel green list**

Expanded list includes Denmark and Switzerland while Thailand goes red.

More countries – including Canada and the Azores – have been added to the green 'traffic light' list for international travel. Other countries turning green include Denmark, Finland, Liechtenstein, Lithuania and Switzerland. Additions to the red list include Montenegro and Thailand. Fully vaccinated people returning amber and green list countries are not required to isolate on return.

See: [Canada and the Azores added to travel green list - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/canada-and-the-azores-added-to-travel-green-list)