



Supporting the hair, beauty
and barbering industries

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

24 June 2020

Dear Chancellor

The package of grants and financial support you have delivered to businesses and workers through the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic has provided a lifeline for so many within the hair and beauty sector, and for this we, the National Hair & Beauty Federation, are most grateful.

Businesses are beginning to reopen safely, but there are still many who are not permitted to do so, cannot generate revenue and are in need of further support.

Grants such as the Small Business Grant Scheme, the Discretionary Grant Fund and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Scheme have been essential in the past three months for the small businesses (approximately 95% of our members who employ fewer than 10 people) hit hardest by the pandemic. These grants sadly have all but been spent keeping businesses afloat during the crisis, and whilst other businesses can now begin to generate income by reopening, businesses such as those we represent within the beauty sector cannot.

57% of beauty therapists are also self-employed. Whilst many have utilised the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, a significant portion have not been able to receive grants due to being newly self-employed, having a period of time off sick, or on maternity leave, which has affected their earnings over a three-year period.

Other financial pressures are mounting too. In a recent survey of members, a significant portion had taken out loans under the Bounce Back Loans Scheme and were therefore accumulating debt which they are not in a position to start paying back. In addition, whilst grateful for the furlough scheme, changes at from 1 August will have a huge impact on employers with no earnings to top up wages, National Insurance and pension contributions if they aren't yet trading by then. Business owners who fell through the cracks for support due to paying themselves via dividends or with business rates just over the £51,000 threshold need support now.

We would therefore implore you to look to provide further financial grants to those businesses that remain unable to reopen due to current government restrictions and encourage local authorities utilise the full non-discretionary funding allocated to them.

Additional support measures on business rates, reliefs, and other taxes would also greatly assist sectors such as ours as well as the wider high street. Prior to the pandemic, high street retailers were already struggling with high business rates and rents, reduced footfall and empty shops. Hair salons, barbershops and beauty salons are widely considered to be the backbone of the high street. If the high street is to thrive it is essential that industries such as hair and beauty, that provide services which cannot be provided online and therefore generate essential footfall for the high street, are supported by government.

Further support from you and the Government during this time of continued closure will truly be the difference between many businesses within the beauty sector surviving or being forced to close. I therefore hope you will strongly consider these proposals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brownlie', with a large, stylized initial 'B' and a long, sweeping underline.

Victoria Brownlie
Director of Policy and Public Affairs
National Hair & Beauty Federation