



MINSTER LOVELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: Alexandra Molton

111 Walker Drive, Faringdon SN7 7FY

Email info@minsterlovell-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07712 705865

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON MONDAY 20th APRIL 2020.

This meeting was undertaken with the participation, through e-mail and discussion, of all Councillors on Monday April 20th 2020.

Present: Cllr. David Haley (Chair), Cllr. Chris Jones, Cllr. Ann Williams, Cllr. Jonathan Stowell, Cllr. Colin Alderman, Cllr. Jean King, Cllr. Sue Bicker, Alexandra Molton (Clerk).

Apologies: None.

1. Welcome / Members present and apologies for absence.

All Councillors participated in a discussion on the agenda items.

2. Declaration of interest in agenda items.

None were declared.

3. Parishioner's Public Participation (for questions and comments on agenda items).

The agenda for the Council's discussion was published at least 5 days in advance of the meeting. The agenda provided an opportunity for parishioners and members of the public to notify the Clerk in advance of the meeting with any questions or comments on the agenda. No parishioners or members of the public contacted the Clerk.

4. Council response to Covid-19.

The Clerk provided the Council with the following update:

The Government has passed legislation to confirm that Councils are no longer required to hold their Annual Council meeting during 2020 and all planned local elections for 2020 are now postponed until 2021. The legislation allows for Councils to hold virtual meetings to conduct Council business, including giving permission for Councillors to vote during virtual meetings rather than only doing so in person as previously required.

The Parish Council agreed to hold the April Parish Council meeting via email and asked parishioners to contact the Clerk in advance of the meeting with questions and comments on agenda items. Arrangements for the May meeting will be reviewed as further information about Covid-19 and social distancing requirements are issued. It is likely that this will be conducted using video conferencing software.

The Clerk has created a page on the Parish Council website with information for residents on local support and facilities which are available, as well as updated information about Council services. The Clerk has produced a leaflet to be delivered to all households in the Village (attached Appendix 1). It provides information and contacts for support and advice. The Clerk will print and organise the distribution throughout the village. Cllr. Haley, Cllr. Jones, Cllr. Bicker and Cllr. Walker, as well as several residents of the village, have offered to help.

5. To receive the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting dated 16th March 2020.

Councillors agreed the minutes via email and will ratify them at the next meeting on 18th May 2020.

6. To receive an update from District Councillor Gill Hill.

Cllr. Hill provided a detailed report on the work of West Oxfordshire District Council during Covid-19. This is attached to the minutes in Appendix 2.



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Council Tax remains one of the lowest in the country with an increase of £5 which is within Government guidelines. This means that the Council's charge for the average Band D property is £104.38 per year or £2 a week.

Almost 500 affordable homes have been delivered in the District in the last year. There has been continuing success with homelessness projects such as Our House which supports single under-35s who are in housing and employment need.

The rollout of high speed broadband to 5,000 properties has taken place with a further 5,000 planned for this year.

Grants to the community and voluntary sector will be maintained at current levels along with free car parking. New priorities such as tackling climate change will also receive investment.

In December 2019 David Neudegg retired as Managing Director of the Publica Group having joined West Oxfordshire District Council as Chief Executive in 2007. The Publica Group is a partnership between four councils, Cheltenham Borough Council, Forest of Dean, Cotswold and West Oxfordshire District Councils to deliver more efficient and improved services.

Councillors did not have any questions for Cllr. Hill regarding her report.

7. To receive an update from District Councillor Kieran Mullins.

Cllr. Mullins sent the following report:

Government Grants for Businesses:

Government grants are being sent out to businesses affected by the COVID-19 crisis and, to date, they have paid out over £14m to nearly 1200 businesses (representing about 60% of businesses) and the team is working hard to provide grants to the remaining eligible businesses by the end of April

Businesses that are concerned about the progress of their grant application can contact the council either by telephone on 01993 861070 or by email to local.taxation@westoxon.gov.uk quoting their business rates account number.

Businesses that have not applied can check their eligibility and download the form from the [WODC website](#)

Homelessness:

There have been some challenges particularly with finding emergency accommodation but Cherwell and Vale District Councils helping out. There is no-one falling through the net at present but WODC is aware of the issue and will ensure constant monitoring.

Vulnerable groups:

There are 1100 in the initial shielded list particularly located in Witney and Carterton. This will be updated with a further list which will be ready for next week of those not on the original list. WODC is signposting to support groups that are being set up or currently exist.

Where there are gaps in geographical support staff pick up the issues directly

It is important that local groups inform WODC of what they offer to ensure we have a comprehensive network. This can be done via communitysupport@westoxon.gov.uk fao Heather McCulloch.

WODC Staff & Finances:

116 staff have been deployed to new roles related to communications and community resilience. Contact calls are increasing but being managed well currently.

The recent events will have a significant impact on Council finances with business rates relief, council tax hardship fund claims, huge reduction of income from leisure facilities, and decrease in income from rents. The Council's finances are resilient enough to withstand this so far but it is something we all have to be mindful of as West Oxfordshire residents.



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WODC Meetings:

Meetings of WODC councillors have been cancelled since lockdown began but hopefully we will be using technology soon to be able to carry on with a modicum of normality. There will be a full council meeting on 13th May and then the sub-committee scrutiny meetings will resume at some point after that.

Councillors did not have any questions for Cllr. Mullins regarding his report.

8. To receive an update from County Councillor Liam Walker.

Cllr. Walker sent the following report:

COVID-19

■ For extremely vulnerable Oxfordshire residents who have received a letter from the NHS and who have no support network, local councils and the voluntary and community sector have created dedicated points of contact offering priority support across the county.

West Oxfordshire: 01865 897820 or shield@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Phone lines open Mon-Fri 8:30-8:00 or Sat-Sun 9:00-5:00

■ For any resident wishing to volunteer or set up a community group there is a website now set up specific for Oxfordshire with lots of information on it. Please visit: [Oxfordshire All In](#).

■ Please be on your guard against criminals and scammers exploiting the coronavirus situation in Oxfordshire. Our Trading Standards team have seen several cases where groups are claiming to be offering council tax refunds to residents. Be careful what emails or text messages you reply too and remind elderly family members and neighbours to stay alert.

■ OCC staff are now operating remotely but it is still very much business as usual for our teams. For me and my teams in highways we are making sure we are using this opportunity to our advantage to carry out road resurfacing schemes and fixing potholes. I'm pleased this is working well whilst making sure they are still working in a safe way respecting the social distancing rules.

■ We have now closed all our household waste recycling centres in order to protect our staff and to discourage non-essential journeys by people being made. We do continue to review this each week, but District Councils are still carrying out kerbside collection where some of this waste can be disposed of.

■ OCC is working closely with the Government, Public Health England, and District Councils to protect the most vulnerable in Oxfordshire and help prevent the wider spread of the virus. We now also have a temporary mortuary facility at Upper Heyford but we are very much hoping we won't need to use this.

■ A few residents have been in contact with me about Minster Lovell ruins due to people still using this area to meet with friends or to have a picnic. If anyone sees this sort of thing taking place you can report this to the Police via their non-emergency number 101 or online. There is now a taskforce group set up in West Oxfordshire to help deal with this specific issue across the District.

Wychwood Close Parking

■ It seems this issue has now stopped but I believe you still wish to go ahead with the fence. I am still happy to support the PC with 50% of the cost from my Councillor Priority Fund just let me know when you are ready and I will send you the form.

A40 Resurfacing Work

■ From next week our team will be doing some resurfacing work on the A40 from the Minster slip road to the Asthall Roundabout. There will be a mix of lane closure then a full closure will be in place over the week.



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9. To review planning applications, decisions, appeals and enforcements*

The Clerk emailed Councillors two cases for consideration and comment before the meeting, one due to the short deadline and another due to being unsure whether a meeting would take place this month.

Councillors have considered the following applications and agreed not to comment on either application:

- a) **20/00823/FUL; Land South East Of Old Manor House School Lane Little Minster Minster Lovell Oxfordshire: Erection of a detached dwelling with associated landscaping works and provision of car parking.**

Cllr. Haley pointed out that the title of this application was incorrect in comparison with the former application for the same works.

ACTION: Clerk to contact WODC to inform them of this error.

- b) **20/00888/HHD; 164 Brize Norton Road Minster Lovell Witney Oxfordshire OX29 0SH; 164 Brize Norton Road Minster Lovell Witney Oxfordshire OX29 0SH: Erection of timber garage (retrospective).**

10. Update on enforcement cases.

The Clerk has contacted the Enforcement Officer at WODC regarding cars parking on the grass at the garage on Brize Norton Road and has been assured that the current tenants will be resurrecting low-level fencing on the site to show clearly the boundaries.

The Clerk has contacted the Enforcement Officer at WODC to ask for an update on the tree felling case in the lower Village but has not yet received a response.

There are no other outstanding applications or enforcements this month.

11. Monthly dog fouling report.

Cllr. Bicker confirmed that Mrs Holloway had reported that there were no issues to note.

12. To consider quotations for Parish Council annual insurance and select a provider.

The Clerk has received three quotations for annual Parish Council insurance:

- BHIB: £453.15 + VAT
- Parish Protect (current provider): £388.00 + VAT
- Zurich: £536.25 inc. VAT

The Clerk provided details of the quotations to Councillors ahead of the meeting and all Councillors agreed to go ahead with the insurance offered by Parish Protect as this was significantly less than the other quotations provided.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Parish Protect to confirm the insurance for 2020-21.

13. Allotments report.

Cllr. Bicker confirmed that there are no issues to report at the allotments.

- a) **To approve and sign tenancy agreement for new allotments tenant.**

A signed tenancy agreement for a new tenant for plot 4a was scanned and emailed to Cllr. Haley and Cllr. Jones to sign and the new tenancy was agreed.



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ACTION: Clerk to contact the new tenant to confirm her tenancy.

The Clerk has issued invoices for annual rent charges and will shortly be issuing invoices for the annual water charges.

14. Working Groups: Church Yard Extension and Village Hall.

The Council has suspended the work of the Working Groups during the Covid-19 pandemic and this will resume when the Council returns to transacting its business in the usual way.

15. Matters and actions arising from the previous meeting which are not covered by other agenda items:

a) To review Action Log.

The Clerk completed this and made this available for Councillors to view in advance of the meeting. Councillors did not have any queries about the actions which had taken place.

b) To receive Ripley Avenue play park inspection.

This was not completed as the play park is currently closed in line with Government advice.

The Council reviewed the quotations provided to level the BMX track and move the goalposts from their current location. The quotations were as follows:

McCrackens: £470+ VAT

Ubico: £638.75 + VAT

Hill & Son: £620.00 + VAT

Cllr. Stowell proposed that the Council initially only undertake the work to level the BMX track and leave the goalposts where they currently are. All Councillors were in agreement.

c) Access to Post Office noticeboard.

The Post Office has confirmed that it would be prepared to hold a key for the noticeboard in order for the public to access one side to erect notices.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange for keys for both noticeboards to be cut and delivered to the Post Office and Spar Shop once the pandemic has passed and to advertise access to the noticeboards in the next edition of the Village News.

d) Wychwood View fencing.

McCrackens has confirmed that the work to erect the fencing is likely to take place during May.

ACTION: Clerk to liaise with McCrackens to confirm a start date for the work and inform Mr Williams to ensure that vehicles are not parked on the verges. Clerk to liaise with Cllr. Walker regarding payment for the work.

Cllr. Stowell has re-attached the road sign for Wychwood View and Cllr. Bicker cleaned the sign. Councillors therefore decided against obtaining quotations for a new street sign at this time.

16. Finance:

a) To consider and approve payments due

Invoice number/ Reference	Cheque number	Payee	Details	Amount
04/12 20/04/20	200926	Alexandra Molton	Wages and office allowance	£692.80
95463 19/03/20	200927	DF Williams	Bus shelter window cleaning	£24.23



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INV00288 31/03/20	200928	Multi Hands	Bus shelter window cleaning	£50.00
ZA329531 02/04/20	200929	Information Commissioner's Office	Annual data protection fee	£40.00

The cheque book and copies of all invoices were sent to Cllr. Haley and Cllr. Jones ahead of the meeting for cheques to be signed and posted.

b) To report payments made with the Council debit card

Payee	Details	Amount
	No payments	

The Clerk will provide a copy of the invoices spreadsheet and confirmations of payments received to the May meeting.

c) Bank reconciliation report for March 2020.

Copies of the bank statements and bank reconciliation report for March have been sent to Cllr. Haley and Cllr. Jones ahead of the meeting.

Cllr. King confirmed that she will get finance details from the Clerk for the internal control check and present this to the Council when this is complete.

d) Receive and review final budget statement for 2019/20.

The Clerk provided this to Councillors in advance of the meeting for consideration. Councillors did not have any queries regarding this report.

e) Clerk Pension payments 2020-21.

The Clerk has requested that the Council contribute to a Pension through the Government's auto-enrol scheme. Councillors did not have any objection to this.

ACTION: Clerk to investigate the implications of this for the Council and bring forward a proposal to the May meeting.

f) Internal pre-audit review.

The Clerk has received confirmation from Jane Olds that she will undertake the pre-audit review for the Council and has provided the initial paperwork for Jane to assess. Cllr. King would like to be involved in this to assist in understanding all audit procedures.

ACTION: Clerk to liaise with Jane regarding items required for the review.

The Clerk informed the Council that the deadline for publishing the draft audit figures has been moved to 30th September and the deadline for publishing final audited accounts has been moved to 30th November.

17. To discuss correspondence received.

The Clerk has received an email from a resident of Ripley Avenue regarding a white BMW which is parked near the entrance to the road. The Clerk has reported this to WODC who will not take any action unless the car is causing an obstruction. Councillors confirmed that the car has been moved.

18. 'Around the Village' – matters not covered by other agenda items that need addressing or noting.

A resident has reported that the posts around the memorial garden on Jubilee Walk need replacing; the Council agreed to seek quotations for the repair or replacement of these.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotations for the work and add this to the May agenda for review.



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Cllr. King reported that a car has been parked for several days on Ripley Avenue playing field and asked if this is one of the residents of Ripley Avenue.

Cllr. King reported that she has carried out a check of the defibrillator at the Post Office and this is in working order.

Signed:

.....
Cllr. David Haley, Chairman

*Listed planning applications are those received by the Clerk in advance of drafting the meeting agenda. The Council will review all applications received up to the date of the meeting.



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Appendix I

Parish Council Covid-19 leaflet.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Dear Minster Lovell Resident,

As the Government announces an extension to the national 'lockdown' for at least another 3 weeks, the Council wants to do everything it can to help everyone in the Village stay safe and well. It is very important that we come together to take care of each other in the community, especially the elderly and most vulnerable.

Despite the fact that events and meetings have been cancelled and the playgrounds, recreation grounds and Wash Meadow have been closed, people in the Village have commented that the 'village is coming together' and that there is a strong sense of community. Many people are enjoying their daily walk and the public footpaths are being well used!

The Parish Council regularly up-dates its [website](#) with information to help residents so please do take a look if you have access to the internet.

DO YOU NEED HELP?

A number of Councillors and members of the community are helping people who are self-isolating and not able to get out, for example with shopping or collecting prescriptions, dog walking or making regular phone contact. If you would like help with anything, even in a small way, please do contact the Parish Clerk and she will get a volunteer to contact you.

CAN YOU HELP?

If you are well, not completely self-isolating and willing to volunteer to help others who need support please also contact the Clerk and she will include you on the volunteer list.

LOCAL SERVICES

The Spar Shop in the Village is able to provide home deliveries - call them on 01993 705442 for more information.

UE Coffee Roasters has organised a 'pop up' produce store that delivers a variety of staple food and vegetable items to the Village. They are located on the Windrush Industrial Estate.

Witney Land Army is providing support for residents of the Village, as well as a prescription delivery service. You can find more information on their [website](#). Call them on 07801 745768 if you would like to make use of their prescription delivery service.

Many other local businesses are offering a home delivery service. If you do not have access to the internet and would like more information about what is available please contact the Clerk.

HOW TO KEEP INFORMED

- Updates from the Government about Covid-19 can be found on their [website](#).
- Updates from Oxfordshire County Council about Covid-19 can be found on their [website](#).



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Updates from West Oxfordshire District Council can be found on their [website](#).

- Oxfordshire County Council has a dedicated helpline number for vulnerable residents to access support. Residents in West Oxfordshire can call the dedicated team on 01865 897820 or email shield@oxfordshire.gov.uk for help. This is operational from 8:30am to 8:00pm Monday to Friday, and 9:00am - 5:00pm Saturday and Sunday. Residents who consider themselves extremely vulnerable can also register with the Government [online](#) for extra support.

The Parish Council will continue to publish a meeting agenda on the noticeboards and web-site and convene its meetings remotely until face to face meetings can start again. The Government has suspended the requirement for an Annual Parish Meeting this year and local elections have been postponed until May 2021.

Please do take the Government's advice to control the spread of the disease:

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home);
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times;
- Wash your hands regularly, especially when returning home after being outside your home.
- Use a tissue for coughs and sneezes (and bin it immediately) and avoid touching your face.
- Look out for symptoms including a high temperature, continuous cough, breathing difficulties and sore throat.
- Avoid all non-essential social contact and self-isolate as a household if any of those in your household display symptoms of the disease.

PASTORAL SUPPORT

If you or anyone in your family would welcome some pastoral support, a listening ear or just a chat, the Churches in the village have offered their support and the contact details are below:

Minster Lovell Methodist Church: Rev. Fred Ireland ireland.fred@googlemail.com or 01993 867301 and Dawn Haley dawn.haley8@gmail.com or 01993 775675

- St. Kenelm's Church: Rev. Hugh White hugh@witneyparish.org.uk or 01869 347889
- The Light House Church: Stephen and Annette Hodge stephen@stephenhodge.co.uk or 01993 778539.

It is going to take a while to distribute this information to every household so if you know of anyone who may need help and support please let them know what is available and pass the information on.

All of the Councillors send you their very best wishes at this time and please don't hesitate to contact us if we can help.

David Haley
Chairman



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Appendix 2

Cllr. Gill Hill report to April Parish Council meeting.

The District Council offices are closed, Officers, Staff Members and District Councillors are all working from home. All meetings have been cancelled. The next Full Council Meeting will be held remotely between 1400 hours and 1600 hours on Wednesday 13 May 2020. More information will follow on how this will be set up. Lowlands and Uplands Planning Committee Meetings are expected to be held in a similar fashion. Parish Councils are doing their best to hold their monthly meetings remotely. All Elections have been cancelled until May 2021.

We continue to receive information from several different sources on how things are progressing: WODC has set up a Hub to distribute information to Parish and Town Councils and any other groups which are active in looking after residents in their Wards. Contact names and numbers are available on most of the Parish Council websites. OCC have a separate form of communication, the Government provides more information.

The good news is that local services continue to operate.

Ubico is doing a splendid job in collecting domestic waste on a regular basis. Bulky collections have been suspended in West Oxfordshire. Small bulky items have been collected from Bring Sites where there has been an issue with fly tipping. In guidance issued by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) it was stated that Household Recycling Centres could remain open if social distancing could be enforced. However, as it is not deemed an essential journey, and with social distancing difficult to enforce at the sites, in partnership with the councils who run these facilities it has been decided that they will remain closed for the time being. However Ubico and those councils are working closely to make preparations to ensure the sites can operate safely and within the bounds of any government restrictions still in place once the decision is taken to open them.

The Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC) continues to provide advice and guidance on matters specific to Parish and Town Councils.

Cottsway Housing is doing all it can to keep customers and staff safe. Government advice is being followed and only essential visits are being carried out until further notice; these are visits that constitute a health and safety risk including emergency repairs and gas servicing. Customers are being supplied with as much support as possible which includes:

Issuing messages and responses via Customer Services for customers concerned about rent payments, with their financial inclusion team on-hand to provide support for those in need.

Identifying and contacting older and vulnerable customers directly by phone to check on their welfare and help signpost them to support services.

Linking up with local councils and community support groups where they can. This includes making grants available via the Cottsway Community Fund to provide financial support to those groups that have been set up to help vulnerable and elderly customers.

Redeploying staff as and where necessary to support customer service demand.

Where staff need to visit homes to carry out essential work, customers are asked to leave the room until the work is complete and will:

- Abide by the recommended safe distancing of at least 2 metres at all times.
- Clean their hands and put on disposable protective gloves.
- Clean their hands again and safely dispose of the gloves as soon as possible after leaving.



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Customers who have any concerns about how COVID-19 pandemic affects them or their tenancy can refer to the [website](#) or alternatively they can telephone Customer Services on 01993 890000.

Housing: Emergency accommodation arrangements are holding up but we are continuously working to source additional accommodation as well as planning for what may be needed when we start to come out of this crisis. In terms of the number of rough sleepers housed in emergency accommodation during the crisis so far this is seven for West Oxfordshire.

Community Support: The WODC Hub is taking referral calls regarding extremely vulnerable (shielded) individuals from the County Council/National Lists seven days a week (including Easter) as well as from concerned local residents. The team is now also making weekly outbound calls to all shielded residents to make contact and make sure their needs are being met. There are over 1100 residents on the shielded list at present and the list is increasing on a daily basis. The contact number for vulnerable residents needing support is 01993 861077 open daily (and throughout the weekend).

Grants and Community Support: Oxfordshire Community Foundation's (OCF) Resilience Fund to support organisations respond to COVID-19 and recover stronger is now up and running. For further information contact OCF via their [website](#).

WODC's own local funding assistance is now operational. This support targets help to local organisations where they are assisting with an immediate pressing priority that needs urgent support (of up to £500 funding) and the work links with the efforts being co-ordinated throughout Community Response Team, contact response.hub@westoxon.gov.uk.

BUSINESS MATTERS

Government Grants out to businesses affected by the COVID-19 crisis remains the Council's top priority. To date, over £14m has been paid out to nearly 1200 businesses and the team is working flat out to award grants to the remaining eligible businesses. Those that are concerned about their grant application can contact the council either by telephone on 01993 861070 or by email to local.taxation@westoxon.gov.uk quoting your business rates account number. Businesses that have not applied can check their eligibility and download the form from the website COVID-19 business grants.

Job Retention Scheme Portal to Open: If you cannot maintain your current workforce because your operations have been severely affected by COVID-19, you can furlough employees and apply for a grant that covers 80% of their usual monthly wage costs up to £2,500 per month, through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. This scheme is administered by HMRC and the portal for making applications will open on Monday 20 April:

CBILS Business Loan Update: CBILS is the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme which gives lenders a government-backed guarantee for the loan repayments to encourage more lending. Lenders can provide up to £5million in the form of:

Term Loans

Overdrafts,

Invoice Finance

Asset Finance.

There have been significant changes to the scheme's features and eligibility criteria to make it more accessible to the businesses that need it. This includes opening it up to smaller businesses facing cash flow difficulties that previously would not have been eligible for CBILS because they met the criteria for a standard commercial facility.

The British Business Bank website sets out the eligibility criteria as well as the information for which lenders will ask in support of an application.



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1-to-1 Business Advice: OxLEP has established a new 1-to-1 business advice service to help businesses struggling to get support through the COVID-19 crisis.

This service includes Guidance on:

Business resilience

Cash flow

Cost reductions

Diversification.

See the OxLEP website for more information on this and other existing business support programmes.

Summary of Business Support

The Government's business support website sets out the full range of business support measures that have been made available to UK businesses and employees.