

Ken Skates AS/MS
Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1061
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/07624/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS

Chair, Petitions Committee

13 January 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 21 December to the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd regarding this petition. I am responding as the issues fall under my portfolio responsibilities.

We are conscious that the pet boarding industry, although been able to operate during some of the restriction period, has faced a significant drop in demand.

We recently confirmed that discretionary support will continue to be available through local authorities in Wales for businesses not on the non-domestic rates (NDR) system who are materially impacted. Discretionary grants of up to £2,000 will continue to be available - details can be found here:

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice/erf-restrictions-business-fund>

Most businesses should also be able to access certain support available from the UK Government – including the Job Retention Scheme:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support>

In addition, alternative funding can be accessed such as the UK Government Bounce Back Loans <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-coronavirus-bounce-back-loan> and the Development Bank of Wales has loan and equity funding available immediately to Welsh businesses <https://developmentbank.wales/>

Our latest packages have been designed to be affordable within the available funding and we had to take difficult decisions on the eligibility criteria.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

In terms of licence fees, this is a matter for the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs. A number of businesses have been hit financially by the pandemic. Therefore, relief from licence fees for animal boarding establishments and not to other businesses from which Local Authorities recover licence fees for example breeders, pubs, music venues etc could be seen as unfair and unjust.

The fee is a matter for each Local Authority to determine and how they calculate this and the individual cost elements that go into the calculation is a matter for them.

The Welsh Government does not deem kennels and catteries eligible for the non domestic rates (NDR) system linked Restrictions Business Fund grants, however, it will be for local authorities to determine if hereditaments are similar in nature to those or not.

We will continue to do all we can to support Welsh businesses through these incredibly difficult times and consider options beyond the current package of support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Ken Skates AS/MS

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