

ANNEX A

From: Richard Lochhead MSP <richard.lochhead.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: 08 April 2020 10:22
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: Alan James, AJ Engineering and Construction Services, 25 West Road, Forres, IV36 2GW

Dear Kate,

Alan James, AJ Engineering and Construction Services, 25 West Road, Forres, IV36 2GW

I've been contacted by my constituent Alan James of AJ Engineering regarding his concerns about the impact of Coronavirus on construction firms like his, and the support needed to ensure these businesses can continue to operate once we're through this difficult period.

Below is a copy of Alan's email, which clearly outlines his concerns about possible gaps in support and the kinds of additional help he feels companies like his may need.

I'd be grateful if you would give his concerns your attention and would welcome a response that I can share with my constituent that addresses these points.

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Richard.

Richard Lochhead MSP for Moray

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From: Alan James
Sent: 24 March 2020 07:15
To: Lochhead R (Richard), MSP
Subject: FW: COVID - 19 and Consequences

24th March 2020

Good morning Richard,

I hope that you and the family are well. Very difficult for you to stay clear and safe and still be in essential contact with the government and local authority agencies.

I would like to highlight a serious concern that I have as a consequence of COVID - 19.

Presently in Forres at AJ Engineering we have about 80 employees and at NEWCo in Fort William have about 20 employees. **[REDACTED]**

Our employees will be furloughed and we hope that will get the very necessary 80% government assistance to ensure that we retain our skilled staff. However my real concern is that companies, such as ours, will be in abeyance but still incurring costs with no income. This will mean that when we come back to work we will not have necessary free working cash to pay our suppliers or staff. One option would be to downsize with the necessary loss of trained staff or, if all else fails, shut the

companies down. Due to a variety of reasons including Brexit there had been a general lack of business confidence however recently due in part to government stability many companies were recently starting to see more confidence and some better financial results but not enough to finance a period of no income.

[REDACTED]

Banks will have low interest loans or deferred interest charges but the debt will still have to be paid. To ensure that companies are fit and able to continue after the COVID - 19 Virus it is essential that the government supports payment of the fixed costs otherwise businesses will be at serious risk of failure just at the time when they will be needed to boost the economy and provide much needed secure employment.

I hope you can raise this serious issue with the Scottish government. To survive COVID - 19 would be fantastic, but to have the consequential business failures and unemployment would be a sad postscript.

I am sending a similar e'mail to [REDACTED] but, in the meantime, I look forward to catching up with you in more certain times.

Kind regards,

Alan
Alan W. James
Managing Director
25 West Road
Greshop Industrial Estate
Forres
IV36 2GW

* 01309 671919

* [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@ajengineering.co.uk

*

ANNEX B

From: Chris.stephens.mp@parliament.uk
Sent: 7 April 2020 13:02
To: scottish.ministers@gov.scot
Subject: Re: Business Support during Covid -19 (Case Ref: CS10938)

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in relation to my email below which was sent on 25th March. I understand you must be really busy, however, I have not received confirmation from the government that this email has been received. I would appreciate if you could investigate this matter.

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

Chris Stephens MP
Glasgow South West

From: Chris.stephens.mp@parliament.uk
Sent: 25 March 2020 13:41
To: scottish.ministers@gov.scot
Subject: Business Support during Covid -19 (Case Ref: CS10938)

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of my constituent Mr Alastair Macphie who is the Finance Director of Barclay & Mathieson Ltd (180 Hardgate Road, Glasgow, G51 4TB) in relation to support his business.

B+M is a steel stockholder with HO in Govan. They have sites throughout the UK and employ 450 overall, with 50 at the Govan HO. The business has had a presence in Govan for over 100 years.

<https://www.bmsteel.co.uk/https://www.bmsteel.co.uk/>

Their business is basically supporting construction-related projects, which are in the process of drying up as sites are understandably shut down.

[REDACTED]

Currently, the additional assistance is available via additional loan funding through:

1. Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme
2. COVID-19 Corporate Financing Facility

Number 1 provides loans of up to £5m but is for companies with turnover £45m.

Number 2 provides loans directly from the government to companies which issue 'Commercial Paper'. These are investment-grade companies (typically very large plc who have international credit ratings).

Their turnover is £130m, so I understand they are not eligible for option 1 and obviously not a large plc so also not eligible for option 2. There is, therefore, a massive gap between £45m companies and extremely large plc where currently no additional loan assistance appears available for them. It seems they are falling in this gap, as will a huge amount of other companies throughout the UK.

I believe this concern has not been highlighted and it does not appear to have been highlighted as an issue. This company is one example but there are other similar companies, will need this remedied otherwise it is likely that they won't survive.

I am contacting you to consider additional funding support for such companies

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

Chris Stephens MP
Glasgow South West

ANNEX C

From: Stewart Hosie <Stewart.hosie.mp@parliament.uk>
Sent: 18 May 2020 11:11
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: IAS scaffolding (Case Ref: SH5677)

Dear Kate

I have received the under-noted and I would be grateful if you could address the points made.

Thank you.

Stewart

From: Sean Reilly
Sent: 11 May 2020 10:04
To: HOSIE, Stewart
Subject: IAS scaffolding

Hi Stewart,

I was wondering if you can help. I current have 49 employees furloughed. That is all my employees bar one who is working at home (accounts manager) in a reduced capacity in order to pay staff and make furlough claims, while on full pay.

As with pub and restaurants we have completely shut down. There is no ability for us to earn any income however all the grants seem to be geared towards retail, hospitality and bars. The coronavirus has had the same impact on our business as it has for the other sectors I listed. However we have been giving no financial assistance. I have applied for the government grants but been knocked back.

To compound this further or 49 employees have now been off on furlough for around 10 weeks. This means that they have all accrued four days holiday. Therefore the company will have To bear the cost of 200 days holiday pay with no income to cover this.

Can you tell me if the government is looking at this. It seems very unreasonable that while on furlough There is not an allowance and for employers to pay holiday pay or a grant to cover this cost during this time.

We have already taken on a massive amount of additional borrowing due to the coronavirus and adding a further £25,000-£30,000 on top of this will not help matters.

It's was Nicola's decision to shut down construction. If it was the PM decision he may well have set up assistance similar to what he has provided for pubs etc. Therefore since it was her decision can you ask what she will do to support the construction industry as there will be a lot of companies closing within the next 12 month if she doesn't.

Kind regards,
Sean Reilly, MSc, IEng MICE
Structural Engineer
IAS Dundee
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ANNEX D

From: Clark P (Peter) <[REDACTED]@parliament.scot>
Sent: 14 May 2020 12:05
To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance <CabSecFinance@gov.scot>
Subject: Building companies

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

As you will be aware, there has been a raft of business support during the coronavirus pandemic, which has successfully assisted businesses. However, a concerned constituent has alerted me to a situation which affecting their business significantly.

A building company in the Borders is facing considerable problems at the moment, having not received an income for seven weeks.

Having taken the official advice, their subcontractors have furloughed themselves. Both the partners of the business have furloughed themselves too, however they are only receiving 25% of their normal income. The building company are also not eligible for any help or grants because they rent the yard out of which they operate.

This, as you can imagine, is causing great distress, and given the company has paid their various taxes over the years, they rightfully want to know what support they are eligible for.

Can you please enlighten me to any support funding for building companies, which can be applied for to ensure that the partners of the business can ensure they are not left with only 25% of their income?

It is clear that construction sites and building work must be included in the first phase of easing lockdown in Scotland. Social distancing can be successfully implemented and I would urge the Scottish Government to allow for businesses, such as building contractors to be allowed to restart work.

I look forward to your response.

Best,
Rachael Hamilton MSP
Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Tourism

[REDACTED]

Sent: 31 March 2020 16:03

To: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Subject: Construction in Scotland During Covid 19

Sirs

The Purvis Group are a medium sized construction services company working in Fife since 1980 with around 400nr local employees across a number of integrated companies.

Clearly we have all been impacted by the current Covid 19 situation and we are making every effort to comply with government guidelines. However, complying with the guidelines is becoming increasingly complex, both due to mixed information being received and to varying standpoints from our clients and customers.

Rather than go in to detail about specific projects and contracts it would be very useful if the Scottish Government are able to provide some substantiation to their stance regarding working on construction contracts and how the furlough situation will be managed within Scotland.

Currently, as a business, we have placed as many people working from home as possible. We are continuing to work in a safe manner where services are critical – fuel deliveries, distribution, NHS contracts etc. We also have a large number of people not at work but who cannot work from home, currently our assumption is that these employees will be covered under the furlough scheme. But will they?

Alok Sharma's letter to the construction industry today seems to be that the industry should continue as normal, where possible. This seems in direct conflict with the Scottish Governments statement about stopping work on construction contracts unless they are critical to resolve the current crisis.

Are Scottish Construction companies going to be caught out by assuming that we are protected under the furlough scheme only to find out too late that this protection does not exist?

Also, we are being placed under extreme pressure by English based clients to continue working as they have been instructed to do so. Are we going to find ourselves in direct breach of contract by trying to comply with Scottish Government guidelines?

Your views would be appreciated.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@purvisgroup.co.uk

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Mob. [REDACTED]

www.realmconstruction.co.uk

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From: Davidson, Shaun [REDACTED]>
Sent: 15 April 2020 12:47
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: COVID 19 – Further Support for Business

Kate Forbes MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, The Scottish Government

Dear Ms Forbes

I would like to start by thanking the Scottish Government for their ongoing efforts to support businesses in Scotland during these difficult and unprecedented times. Like many others, Tarmac has had to take some very difficult decisions to keep our business functioning and to be in a position to support the economic recovery, we all so desperately need, when we are through this crisis.

Tarmac is the leading building materials manufacturer and supplier in the UK and the only cement producer in Scotland. Our contracting business also leads the way in road construction and maintenance. While, we very much welcome the measures the Scottish Government has taken to support businesses through these most challenging circumstances, the impact of the virus on the construction sector and consequently on construction materials has been devastating. Cash flow is critical to keep the business going and I believe there are other measures that the Scottish Government could take that would really help.

A deferment of business rates for the construction and related sectors, as announced by the Scottish Government for some sectors, would go a long way to freeing up cash flow. As would, urgently bringing forward measures to fast track and remove the need to make multiple applications for business rate relief for closed sites. In the case of business rates relief for closed sites, it can take months of bureaucracy to go through the application process for each individual site, during which time rates are still payable and cash is hemorrhaging from the company. The current process also ties up huge amounts of public sector and company resources. If there is anything you can do to help advance these suggestions, it would be greatly appreciated.

Similarly, the deferment of fees relating to planning, permitting and other regulatory costs such as SEPAs fees, along with deferment/cancellation of the Apprenticeship Levy and the removal of fixed electricity charges for sites closed and not consuming electricity, as has already been implemented for water charges in England, would help considerably.

In addition to action on taxes and charges, there is an opportunity for the Scottish Government to take advantage of the considerably reduced volume of traffic on our rail and road networks during the lockdown period. Now would be a good time to accelerate the rail and road programmes by bringing forward planned projects and undertaking essential work, provided these are undertaken in compliance with HPS guidance. The lockdown period could also be used to push through planning applications and bring forward the planning and design of public funded projects, so that they are ready to go as soon as the situation allows. This will reduce Government support costs, reduce the economic impacts on business and help get the country back to work as quickly and as efficiently as possible when it is safe to do so.

Taken together, I believe these measures can help us get through these difficult times and support Scotland's economic recovery in the medium to long term. If you have any questions on how Tarmac

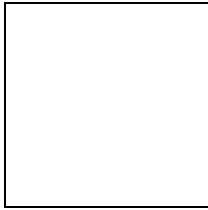
can be of further help to the Scottish Government, I would be happy to discuss these with you or your officials.

Yours sincerely

Shaun Davidson
Managing Director - Materials, North and Scotland

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[\[REDACTED\]@tarmac.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@tarmac.com)

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*Tarmac is the UK's leading sustainable
building materials and construction solutions company*

From: Stuart McDonald <stuart.mcdonald.mp@parliament.uk>
Sent: 29 April 2020 09:50
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: Independent Garden Centres (Case Ref: ML / ZA11454)

Dear Ms Forbes,

I have been contacted by a local independent garden centre concerned that large centres adjoined to chain hardware stores are reopening, however, they are still having to remain shut.

Given the primacy must be on public safety my constituent feels that if it is safe for garden centres to operate then his should be allowed to reopen; however, if it is not, then those hardware stores that are opening their adjoining garden centres should be asked to close their non-essential areas.

Whilst I appreciate the difficulties given the variety of premises that provide these services, would the Government be able to look at this matter and to ensure that the large stores that are able to social distance in a straight forward manner, such as garden centres, are amongst the first premises able to reopen after the lockdown ends.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart McDonald MP