

Businesses must be treated like 'adults'

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With just over a week to the next lockdown review, the Scottish Conservatives are calling for clarity regarding the next phases of lockdown easing.

In May, the First Minister announced the key elements of the Phase 1 of lockdown easing well in advance of the actual implementation date saying that she was treating the people of Scotland as 'adults'.

This time she has so far refused to outline the specific restrictions that will be lifted from June 18 onwards.

This has led to significant confusion and anxiety among Scottish businesses who need time to prepare if they are able to operate properly once lockdown is further eased.

Given the extreme impact the lockdown has had on our economy, the Scottish Conservatives are arguing that more information must be given to businesses so that they can make the necessary preparations prior to restarting.

Maurice Golden, Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary said:

"Everyone understands that normal life won't resume all at once. But businesses can't just reopen at the drop of a hat.

"They need time to prepare, and for firms that can take advance orders or bookings, knowing when they will open again could be a lifeline.

"The last time Nicola Sturgeon announced some restrictions were easing, she gave us some notice.

"In her words, she treated people like adults – telling the country, some time in advance, what was going to be allowed.

"Now it seems that she'll tell us only when she's ready.

"Across Europe, countries are giving specific timelines for different types of firm to open, balancing the public health situation with saving jobs.

"Last week, for example, hotels in Northern Ireland were told they'd open at the end of July – so at least they know how long they have to last, and can start taking bookings.

"That's the kind of clarity we need in Scotland to safeguard jobs."