

Recovering from the virus

The ever tightening lockdowns increase the damage to businesses requiring social contact. They delay the start of recovery and make the loss of more small businesses and supply capacity more likely.

Yesterday's statement from the Chancellor did not update the forecasts for the economy and did not answer the question of why some small businesses that have to shut are left out of the compensation or assistance schemes. Getting through one lock down by borrowing more or drawing down on savings or reserves may be possible but doing it all over again in a second lock down is more difficult. Setting up and running your own business is hard enough without successive bans on trading lasting for the best part of a year.

The government's strategy to get out of this is heavily dependent on rapid roll outs of vaccines. It would also help to redouble efforts to reduce the spread of infection in health settings. The loss of staff from illness and the need to self isolate is adding to the strains. Redoubling efforts to find a wider range of treatments would help, as the treatments cut the time the serious illness lasts.

Today there is another debate on CV 19 in Parliament. It would be good to hear from Ministers progress on providing more support for closed small businesses, more news on infection control and treatments, and some report on how air flow and extraction can be improved to reduce infection spread. We need to get more back to work and more businesses trading as safely as possible.