

Chancellor statement to the House – Plan For Jobs

Thank you, Mr Speaker,

And let me speak first to the people of Liverpool, Lancashire, South Yorkshire, and Greater Manchester, and indeed other areas moving into, or already living under, heightened health restrictions.

I understand your frustration. People need to know this is not forever.

These are temporary restrictions to help control the spread of virus.

There are difficult days and weeks ahead, but we will get through this, together.

People are not on their own.

We have an economic plan that will protect the jobs and livelihoods of the British people wherever they live and whatever their situation.

And just as we have throughout this crisis, we will listen and respond to people's concerns as the situation demands.

And I make no apology for responding to changing circumstances.

And so today we go further.

Mr Speaker,

The Prime Minister was right to outline a balanced approach to tackling coronavirus:

Taking the difficult decisions to save lives and keep the R rate down, while doing everything in our power to protect the jobs and livelihoods of the British people.

The evidence is clear: a regional, tiered approach is the right way to control the spread of the virus.

My Right Honourable Friend the Chief Secretary yesterday set out for the House our economic support for businesses who are legally required to close under those new restrictions.

We're providing billions of pounds of support for local authorities; a grant scheme for affected businesses worth up to half a billion pounds every month;

And, of course, we expanded the Job Support Scheme – with the government covering the cost of paying two thirds of peoples' normal wages if their employer had been legally required to close.

And for areas in local alert level 3 we have made available over a billion pounds of generous up-front grants so that local authorities can support businesses, protect jobs and aid economic recovery, in a fair and transparent way.

That is our plan to support closed businesses.

But it is clear that even businesses who can stay open are facing profound economic uncertainty.

This morning, I met with business and union representatives, including those from the hospitality industry, to discuss the new restrictions.

Their message was clear: the impact of the health restrictions on their businesses is worse than they hoped.

They recognise the importance of the tiered restrictions in controlling the spread of the virus.

But a significant fall in consumer demand is causing profound economic harm to their industry.

It is clear that they, and other open-but-struggling businesses, require further support.

So, Mr Speaker, I am taking three further steps today.

First, I'm introducing a new grants scheme for businesses impacted by Tier 2 restrictions, even if they aren't legally closed.

We will fund local authorities to provide businesses in their area with direct cash grants.

It will be up to local authorities to decide how best to distribute the grants giving them the necessary flexibility to respond to local economic circumstances.

But I'm providing enough funding to give every business premise in the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors a direct grant worth up to £2,100 – for every month Tier 2 restrictions apply.

And that's equivalent to 70% of the value of the grants available for closed businesses in Tier 3. And crucially, I am pleased to confirm these grants will be retrospective.

Businesses in any area which has been under enhanced restrictions can backdate their grants to August.

I have been listening and engaging with colleagues around the House including but not only my Honourable Friends for Heywood and Middleton, Hyndburn, Penistone and Stockbridge, South Ribble, Burnley, Keighley, Cheadle, Leigh and Southport.

I'm pleased to confirm the backdating of the new grants means we are being more generous to businesses and places which have been under higher restrictions for longer.

Let no one say Mr Speaker this Government is not committed to supporting the people and businesses in every region and nation of the United Kingdom.

Second, to protect jobs, we are making the Job Support Scheme more generous for employers. If businesses are legally required to close, as we've already outlined, the Government will cover the full cost of employers paying people two thirds of their salary, where they can't work for a week or more.

For businesses who can open, it is now clear that the impact of restrictions on them, particularly in the hospitality sector, is more significant than they had hoped.

So I am making two changes to the short time work scheme to make it easier for those businesses to keep staff on, rather than make them redundant.

First, under the original scheme, employees had to work for 33% of their normal hours.

Now, we will ask them to work only 20% of their hours.

Second, the employer contribution for the hours not worked will not be 33%, as originally planned, or even 20% as it is in the October furlough scheme – it will reduce to 5%.

And the scheme will apply to eligible businesses in all alert levels, so businesses that are not closed but face higher restrictions in places like Liverpool, Lancashire, South Yorkshire and Greater Manchester, as well as the devolved nations, will be able to access greater support.

These changes mean more employers can access the scheme and more jobs will be protected.

We have made this one of the most generous versions of a short time work scheme anywhere in the world.

It is better for businesses, better for jobs, and better for the economy.

Third, as we increase the contribution we're making towards employees' wages, I'm increasing our contribution to the incomes of the self-employed as well.

Today, we are doubling the next round of the self-employed income support from 20% to 40% of people's incomes, increasing the maximum grant to £3,750.

So far, through this crisis, we have now provided over £13 billion of support to self-employed people.

Sole traders, small businesses and self-employed people are the dynamic entrepreneurial heart of our economy – and this government is on their side.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker,

A wage subsidy for closed businesses.

A wage subsidy for open businesses.

Cash grants of over £2,000 a month for Tier 2 businesses and up to £3,000 for closed businesses.

Support for local authorities.

Support for the self-employed.

Support for people's jobs and incomes.

All on top of over £200 billion of support since March.

This is our plan: a plan for jobs, for businesses, for the regions, for the economy, for the country; a plan to support the British people.

And I commend this statement to the House.

Baroness Sugg speech on girls' education at UNESCO's Global Education Meeting

I am pleased to join you all today on behalf of the UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson. Global education is a top priority for the United Kingdom.

I'd like to thank my fellow co-hosts, Norway and Ghana, and of course, UNESCO for convening so many of us today.

In my remarks at the start of this extraordinary meeting on Tuesday I said that this is a crisis affecting every country. What has been clear in the discussions of the last two days is that there are particular challenges facing low-income countries and we need to come together to step up support.

As has been highlighted by many contributors to this meeting, even before COVID-19 struck, we were facing a learning crisis. Hard-won improvements in access to education were not matched by improved quality. World Bank and UNESCO data suggested that globally, over half – 53% – of children could not read and understand a simple story by the age of 10. In Low-Income Countries this figure was nearly nine in ten children.

Projections now suggest that the global rate may have increased to 63%, driven by massive disruption that has affected over a billion children since

the pandemic began.

This is a tragedy for those children, but also for their communities and nations, as they risk missing out on the long-term health, economic, and social benefits that a quality education can secure.

To avert this tragedy, UNESCO has asked us to 'reimagine and recommit' to education.

'Reimagining' education requires taking tough decisions to prioritise what we know is effective. Next week I am looking forward to launching the Global Evidence Panel on Education with World Bank colleagues. The Panel reflects the growing global consensus on what is effective in getting children learning – even more important as the economic and health pressures of COVID-19 begin to bite.

For the UK, re-commitment starts with political leadership. All of us here today must work to elevate education as a core part of our COVID-19 responses. The UK believes that girls' education should be central to this, and we will be standing up for the right of every girl to 12 years of quality education. Next year, this will be at the heart of our G7 Presidency, so the transformative power of girls' education gets the political attention it deserves.

'Re-Commitment' also means proper resourcing. Throughout these first months of the pandemic, the UK has protected education support in our aid programmes. But more is needed. That is why next year, we will co-host the financing summit for the Global Partnership for Education with our good friends in the Government of Kenya. The Replenishment has a rolling financial target of \$5 billion for the next five years. Yet even this won't be enough on its own. We need innovative financial solutions to close the enormous financing gap, drawing in finance from additional sources, including the private sector.

The GEM2020 Declaration recognises the challenge we face. I very much welcome the focus on the most marginalised, including girls, and the call to action on finance. I look forward to seeing the proposals from UNESCO to strengthen the SDG4 Steering Committee, which must help make our collective efforts all the more effective.

We knew before COVID-19 hit that business as usual wouldn't fix the learning crisis. It is now more important than ever that we raise our game, and come together in an effort to reduce the global learning gap. You can all count on the UK as a committed partner as we do so.

Flublok vaccine given authorisation for temporary supply in the UK to meet public health need

Flublok vaccine

Flublok is a flu (influenza) vaccine for adults who are 18 years of age and older. It will be used as part of the UK's 2020/21 seasonal flu programme from December.

Flublok is made by Sanofi and is licensed for use in the USA by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). It has been used there since 2016 and has been distributed to over 9 million people. The FDA considers the vaccine safe and acceptable for use.

Flublok has been given authorisation for temporary supply by the UK Department of Health and Social Care and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for immunisation against flu in this year's seasonal flu programme to meet public health need.

Scientific assessment

The MHRA assessed the available scientific evidence for Flublok relating to its safety, quality and effectiveness.

Their assessment was based in part on evidence from another closely related Sanofi flu vaccine, Supemtek. This was recommended for approval by the European Medicines Agency in September 2020.

The MHRA assessment showed the two products are fundamentally similar on the basis of a review of the manufacture, control, quality, non-clinical and clinical evaluation.

The regulator also sought advice from the government's independent expert scientific advisory body – the [Commission on Human Medicines](#) (CHM). The CHM agreed with the MHRA's assessment and concluded that Flublok protects against flu and meets high standards of safety and quality.

Advice for the general public

Flu can spread very fast and can have serious consequences. Having a flu vaccine can protect you and helps reduce transmission to others.

Your doctor can recommend the best time to be vaccinated.

Please read the patient information leaflet (PIL) carefully before you get a flu vaccine.

Like all medicines and vaccines, Flublok can cause side effects, although not everyone gets them.

If you get any side effects, even if suspected, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the PIL.

You can also report side effects directly via the national reporting system run by the MHRA known as the [Yellow Card Scheme](#). Or search for MHRA Yellow Card in the Google Play or Apple App Store.

By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of medicines.

[The situation in and around Nagorno-Karabakh: UK statement, 22 October](#)



Thank you Mr Chair.

The United Kingdom welcomed the second announcement of a humanitarian ceasefire and we are once again deeply disappointed to see that it is not being respected.

We strongly condemn the continued shelling of civilian areas. The UK continues to make our position clear: the targeting of civilian settlements is unacceptable and civilian populations must be protected. We offer our condolences to the families of those who have lost loved ones. Our thoughts are with those who have been displaced and whose lives are being affected.

The humanitarian situation continues to worsen and we are particularly concerned about the impact on children. The rising number of COVID-19 cases across the region presents a huge risk to these communities and we urge both parties to consider the humanitarian impact of their actions.

We urge the parties to the conflict to stop the violence immediately, abide by the 17th October agreement and return to substantive negotiations under the auspices of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs. The parties must also grant the ICRC swift and unimpeded access and support their efforts as they seek to facilitate the return of prisoners of war and the remains of the deceased. The UK continues to offer its full support to the Minsk Group Co-Chairs and welcomes their efforts so far. The Minsk Group remains the primary format through which a settlement should be reached. We urge all parties and friends of both States to redouble their efforts in support of an end to hostilities.

We continue to urge the parties to recognise that a military solution will not be forthcoming; a diplomatic, peacefully negotiated solution remains the only option. The parties must urgently return to the negotiating table to engage in substantive discussions without preconditions.

Once again I would like to reiterate the UK's support for the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs in their role in mediating negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Thank you.

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[PM meeting with Prime Minister of Iraq: 22 October 2020](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi in Downing Street.



This morning, the Prime Minister welcomed Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi and his ministers to Downing Street.

They reflected on the UK and Iraq's historic and close relationship, and resolved to strengthen the strategic partnership between our two nations.

Prime Minister al-Kadhimi described the economic and security challenges facing Iraq and set out his government's programme of financial reform and stabilisation.

The leaders agreed to work together to address critical political, security and prosperity issues, and the Prime Minister pledged the UK's support for the Iraqi government as it implements reforms.

They also welcomed the first meeting of the Iraq Economic Contact Group today in London, which will help to drive forward efforts to address the challenges faced by Iraq and create opportunities for the Iraqi people.

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