

COVID-19 Business Impact Survey

May 2020



Ards and
North Down
Borough Council

Understanding the issues, priorities and needs of the
businesses within the Borough in relation to COVID-19

May 2020



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256 responses

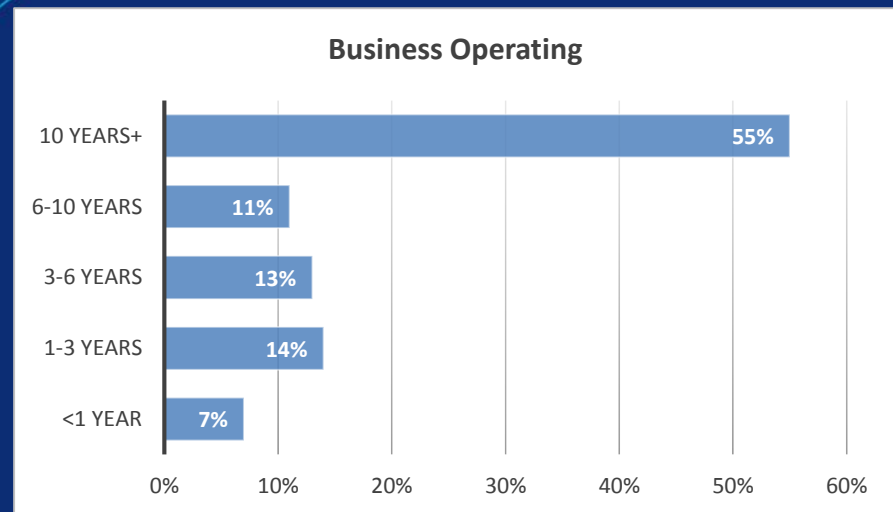
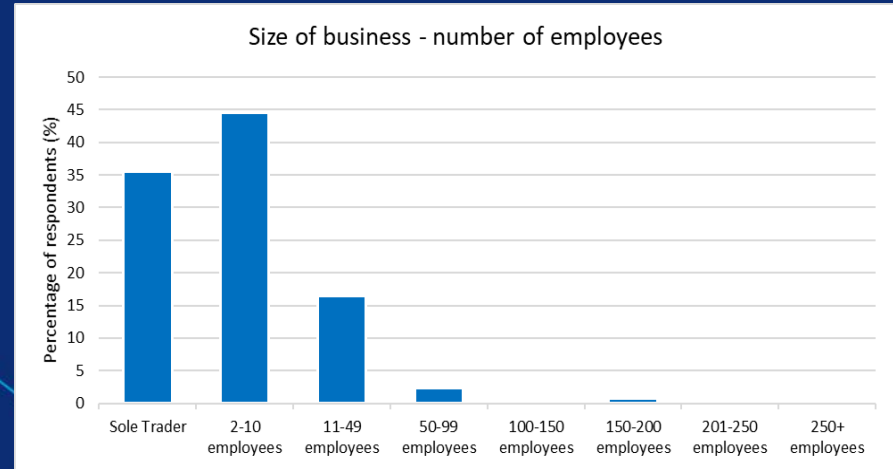


Key Findings

- Over 70% of businesses have now closed, with 3% unlikely to reopen
- 81% of businesses reported a loss of revenue
- 10% of businesses reported permanent or likely job losses
- 47% of businesses have furloughed staff
- High demand for financial support; short and long term
- Other support responses include extension of grant schemes, guidance for re-opening businesses, assistance sourcing and funding PPE, related training and Borough marketing campaigns

Respondent's Profile

Sector	% respondents
Other	19.9%
Retail (Non Food)	9.4%
Pubs / bars / restaurants	9.4%
Production / Manufacturing	7.4%
Retail (Primarily Food)	5.1%
Construction	5.1%
Creative and Digital	4.3%
Recreation or Activity Provider	4.3%
Accommodation providers	3.9%
Health	3.9%
Education	3.5%
Arts and Entertainment	3.5%
Business Support and Admin	3.1%
Tourism attraction / experience	3.1%
Finance and Insurance	2.7%
Professional Scientific and Technical Activities	2.7%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	2.7%
Transport and Storage	1.6%
Wholesale	1.6%
Information and Communication	1.6%
Motor Trades	1.2%



How has COVID-19 Impacted your Business?

Revenue

- ❑ 81% of businesses reported a loss of revenue
- ❑ 68% of businesses have temporarily closed
- ❑ 3% of business have closed and are unlikely to re-open

Staffing & Jobs

- ❑ 46% of businesses have furloughed their staff, with 43% successfully availing of the Job Retention Scheme. Sectors with the highest levels of furloughed staff:
 1. Pubs/Bars/Restaurants, 2. Motor Trades, 3. Retail
- ❑ 25 businesses reported job loses

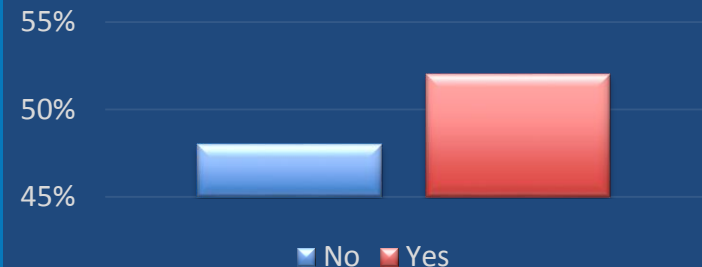
Does your insurance cover you against COVID-19



■ No ■ Yes ■ Unknown



Has COVID-19 impacted your supply chain?

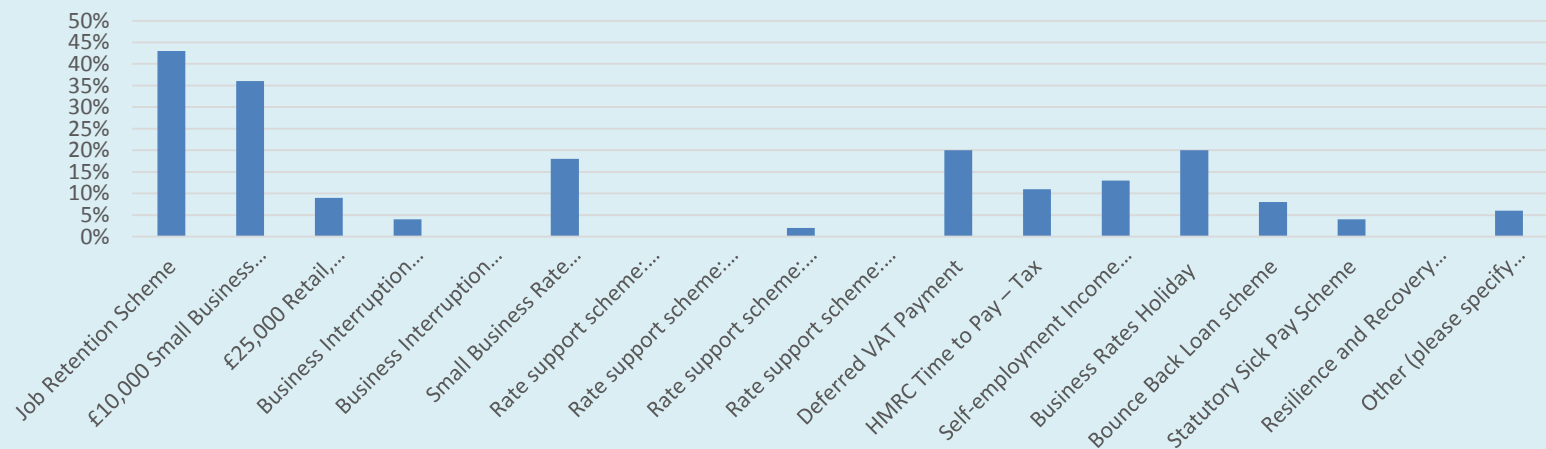
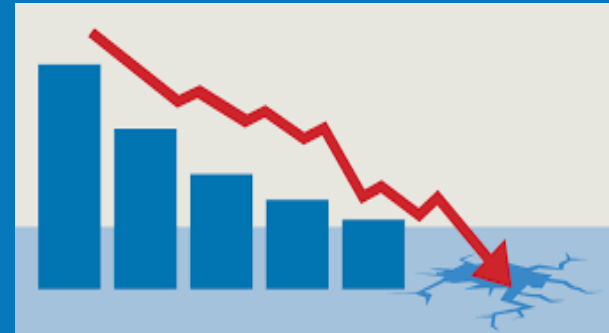


Finance/ Access to Government Support?

- ❑ 41% reported that they are experiencing problems with cashflow
- ❑ The most availed government support schemes were the Job Retention Scheme with 43% take up, followed by the £10K Small Business Support Grant Scheme with 36% take up

Why did 26% of business not avail of any government support scheme?

'Difficulty applying due to rates status, ineligible, awaiting self-employment scheme, not in business long enough'



What support does your business need short & long term?

Short Term (next two months) – Top Answers

Financial	Strategic
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Help with cash flow issues-Extension of grant schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Practical support and guidance

Long Term (within next six months) – Top Answers

Financial	Strategic
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Financial support/grants-Continuation/extension of current support measures-Option to defer payments/ VAT reductions-Financial assistance for PPE and adapting business premises-Reduction in overheads-Financial assistance to develop digital service/online presence-Technology grants to invest better in remote working capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Exit Framework from Government-Regulations/guidance setting out the requirements for re-opening-Guidance for best practice when working in customers' homes-Training in websites, e-commerce and social media-ANDBC Shine Programme-Investment in promoting and advertising the Borough-Assistance with consumer confidence

What other support does the Government need to introduce?

Financial Support



- Greater financial support *(stated by 58% of businesses)*
- Wider inclusion of businesses for government support schemes
- Further grants to assist businesses re social distancing & PPE
- Timescales improved for processing of grants *(6% of businesses stated they are still awaiting grants)*
- Grants aimed at manufacturing
- Extend existing schemes
- Rent relief
- VAT reduction
- Overhead reductions
- Tax incentives to stimulate work
- Redundancy support

Coming out of lockdown

- Lifting of restrictions to re-open economy *(stated by 9% of businesses)*
- Re-opening of facilities
- Clear guidance and schedule of how restrictions will be eased
- Guidance on how businesses can operate safely *(stated by 9% of businesses)*
- Retain connectivity with GB and EU
- Initiative to improve consumer confidence and attract customers back to local shops

Change in Legislation

- Change NI Licensing Laws to allow direct sales to customers
- Create a Universal Basic Income

Other

- Widespread testing for COVID-19 antibodies/virus
- Encourage physical and mental wellbeing initiatives
- Improved broadband and mobile network in rural areas

What support can the Council provide to assist your business?

Financial Support

- Support grants
- Assistance for the self-employed/ creative industry businesses
- Grants/ assistance for PPE and installing social distancing measures
- Free waste collections
- Rent and rates relief
- More start up support for new businesses

Training

- Guidance and training to adapt business models
- Mentoring and free webinars on topics such as marketing and ideas for rebuilding businesses post lockdown
- Free training for staff to upskill of new social distancing requirements/ customer care

Communications & Advice



- Lobby the Government for additional business support
- Guidance on how businesses can re-open safely and ensure compliance
- Post-lockdown marketing campaigns
- Assistance delivering social distancing messages to customers

Top Topics requested in Training/ Mentoring based Programmes

Managing your business finances through uncertain times	25%
Emerging best practice for business: Going into, managing and coming out of lockdown	27%
Best Practice Solutions – Managing your finances during COVID-19	16%
Making the move to E-Commerce	15%
Personal Resilience/ Mental Health	14%
Cyber Security/ protecting your digital presence	12%
Managing and Motivating Teams in a Virtual World	10%

What Next / Recommendations?

Area	Council Action	Date
Lobby Government for ongoing support	Continue to provide Business Support advice	Ongoing
	Continue to feed into DfE, INI and TNI business issues and requests	Ongoing
Provide easy to access guidance on how businesses can re-open	Work with Government/Public Health Agency to provide an easy to use e-guide providing up to date advice across the range of business sectors	29.05.2020 (and regularly updated)
Provide guidance on PPE	Guidance on PPE to be included in e-guide	29.05.2020
	Provide a list of PPE suppliers	29.05.2020
Provide training and support for businesses and their staff on the new C-19 social distancing guidelines	Develop C-19 staff training materials / webinars	Ongoing
Business Support and business start up programmes	SHINE programme adapted to support wider C-19	Actioned
	Business Start up Programme 'Go for It' re-energised	Ongoing
	Digital Growth Programme	Ongoing
	C-19 Restart Programme across Councils	In discussions
Focused Recovery Plans for Business Sectors / the Borough	Establishment of Borough Recovery Structures and development of Economic Recovery Plan	01.06.20 and ongoing
Development of 'Shop Local' and Borough Marketing campaigns	'Shop Local' marketing campaigns being developed as part of Recovery Plan (subject to budget)	Ongoing
	NI & ROI Tourism Borough Marketing Campaigns (subject to budget)	Subject to Government Guidelines



**Thank you to everyone who took part by
completing the survey.**



**Ards and
North Down
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