June 2020

Thank you for contacting me about support for self-employed and freelance workers.

I share your desire to support everyone across the economy, and I read the Bectu proposals with great interest. During the current pandemic, it is crucial that everyone, no matter what their field, is fully supported.

I am happy to say that the Chancellor has put in place measures to support self-employed workers. The Self-Employed Income Support Scheme allows claimants to receive a first taxable grant worth 80 per cent of trading profits, up to a maximum of £2,500 a month.

In order to claim the grant, the self-employed individual needs to have submitted their Self-Assessment tax return for the tax year 2018 to 2019 and have traded in the tax year 2019 to 2020, amongst other criteria. I welcome the Chancellor’s announcement that this scheme will be extended, with applications opening in August for a second and final grant.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme can be applicable to full-time employees, part-time employees, employees on agency contracts, and employees on flexible or zero-hour contracts. These grants currently cover 80 per cent of furloughed employees’ usual monthly wage costs up to £2,500 a month, as well as the associated Employer National Insurance contributions and minimum automatic enrolment employer pension contributions.

Colleagues at the Treasury assure me that they have done all they can to make sure the scheme covers as many employees as possible. The scheme is available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wages-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>.

I welcome that the Scheme has been extended until the end of October.

I do, however, understand that every individual circumstance cannot necessarily be accounted for. In the event that an individual has been affected by the pandemic, yet is ineligible for the aforementioned schemes, I urge them to apply for Universal Credit.

The Chancellor has recently increased Universal Credit by £1,000 a year for 12 months in order to support people through Covid-19.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**

**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**