



Supporting the hair, beauty  
and barbering industries

Paul Scully MP  
Minister for Small Business and the Personal Care Sector  
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy  
Via email

23 December 2021

Dear Minister,

## **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR PERSONAL CARE SERVICES**

As you know, [the National Hair & Beauty Federation](#) is the trade body for over 6,500 hair salons, beauty salons and barbershops across the UK. The sector overall contributes £8 billion to the UK economy every year and employs 288,000 workers, most women and young people, across the UK nations and regions. Pre Covid the sector was in the top three fastest growing parts of the retail sector.

As you know, the recovery in the hair and beauty sector has been finely balanced. Although the respondents to our State of the Industry survey in September reported signs of a growing recovery, two thirds were still either partially or completely reliant on government support and one third unsure of their survival to the end of the tax year in March 2022.

The situation changed suddenly last week with the growing concerns about the Omicron variant building on the additional restrictions announced in in all four countries of the UK. This was particularly worrying for the hair & beauty sector: December is normally one of the busiest times of year, and cash generated is essential to see businesses through the quieter months of January and February.

We ran a snap poll last week (4,000+ responses) which found that 73% of respondents had experienced cancellations with 56% reporting a reduction in advance bookings and more than half saying that the fall-away was seriously affecting their business. We followed this up with a further poll (3,200) to gauge the situation over the past weekend (17-19 December), which found that 30% of booked appointments had been cancelled and the walk-in trade had fallen to 19% of what would have been expected. Around 50% of respondents estimated they had lost between 21-50% of their expected revenue over the weekend and around 20% lost between 50 and 100%.

In the light of this, we are grateful for the Government's swift response this week in announcing further support to businesses in England through the top-up of over £100m in Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) and a reintroduction of the Statutory Sick Pay Rebate scheme for Covid-related absences.

We appreciate that the ARGs are in the control and awarded at the discretion of local authorities. Bearing in mind the experience of this from earlier this year, we would very much welcome your support again in ensuring that local authorities are aware that the Government's intention is that the personal care sector should be considered as one of the sectors eligible for support in the dissemination of the grants and that applications are processed as soon as possible.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

*Richard A. Lambert*

Richard Lambert  
NHBF chief executive