



Our ref: KS/01882/20

Ian Steele
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Elinor Weekley

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7 May 2020

Dear Ian, Gerald and Elinor,

Thank you for your letter of 20 April to the Minister for Housing and Local Government regarding the Construction Sector in Wales. It was passed to me due to my portfolio responsibilities.

I am very grateful for the way the construction industry has responded to our guidance of 7 April, which we issued under regulation 7A of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020, on taking all reasonable measures to ensure that a distance of 2 metres is maintained on particular premises.

We are now working with the UK Government and Devolved Administrations on further safe working measures. However, I can assure you, we will not want to sign up to anything without first engaging both employers' and employees' representatives at a Wales level in relation to their development.

I am very mindful of the post-Covid recovery phase for the economy and what measures we will need to take to minimise the impact of the virus on jobs and the Welsh economy in future. That is why we have recently established an advisory team to work with the Counsel General on this recovery stage. Our [recovery framework](#) sets out how we will lead Wales out of the crisis in a way that keeps everyone safe and revitalises our economy as quickly as possible. The framework will help us decide when the time is right to start lifting the stay at home restrictions carefully. We are also in regular contact with UK Government and Devolved Administration colleagues on this matter.

Public authorities across Wales are working in extraordinary circumstances and many of the resources identified in your correspondence have been diverted onto critical infrastructure to assist the NHS, such as the development of field hospitals. Clearly the next stage will be a

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

move from critical response groups to recovery groups to gradually plan for the easing back of services when the current restrictions start to be eased.

In terms of a potential fund set up by the Welsh Government to repay the VAT paid to builders by the public for “home repair and maintenance, and energy efficiency improvement measures”. That VAT, subject to the usual deductions for input VAT paid, will have been paid to the UK Government and the amount of VAT paid on such works by Welsh citizens in any one year is unknown.

At this time we are concentrating significant resources to tackling the immediate crisis and establishing such a fund would impact on other budgets under the current devolution settlement.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Ken Skates AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales