

**Philip White**  
**Deputy Leader**  
**Cabinet Member for Economy & Skills**

**Councillor for Dove Division**  
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Your Ref:

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Dear Business Leader

While there has been much discussion in the news this week about the UK officially entering a recession as a result of Covid-19, I continue to be optimistic that Staffordshire's economy will recover and renew into the future.

Although we do not yet have the full statistical picture, there are positive signs. The number of people claiming benefits here is lower compared to regionally and nationally, and there are signs that the job market is starting to pick back up. There are also clear emerging opportunities for businesses in digital (including online retail) construction and the green economy, especially those involved in retrofitting homes to improve energy efficiency and electric cars. The economy is definitely starting to renew.

However, times are still tough for many and we are committed to helping businesses whenever possible.

As we move closer to the end of the Job Retention/furlough scheme, you may feel under pressure to consider redundancies because of Covid-19, either because you have already adapted to new ways of working, or the demand is just not there yet. While this may be difficult for you, please know that there is help to transition your staff at risk to new work, at no cost to your business.

The [Redundancy and Recruitment Triage Service](#) was one of the first quick-response services set up in the country to help match people to new careers in new growth sectors. Run by the National Careers Service West Midlands, people are already realising their transferable skills and talents match up to new roles both within and outside of their current industry, and many have not looked back.

Alongside free one-to-one support for your staff, you can also get a bespoke plan for your business to help them access the support they need.

The service is of course there for you and your staff regardless of your sector and size of business, and where you are in the process of making staffing changes. The best time to get in touch with the service is now if you are just thinking about it. Planning in the help from the Triage Service at any early stage can make all the difference in terms of consistency for you and your staff. It really can mean a smooth transition into new careers. More information can be found [here](#) or on 07879 60363.

Please also remember that the [Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub](#) is your first port of call for any support that you need in terms of funding (there are small business grants still available), training, talking through business opportunities, business diagnostics, etc. The qualified business advisors have helped thousands of people through Covid-19 and now helping many to begin to grow again. The [Skills Hub can help you upskill your staff for the future](#), and access up to £5,000 in funding for that training. Please do access the support that continues to be there for you to help you to recover and grow.

Yours sincerely



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