

Animal grooming businesses - clarification in Government guidance- Northumberland County Council Position

In January 2021, following a review of the Government FAQs and intelligence from other regional Local Authorities Northumberland County Council agreed to support Dog Groomers through the Local Restriction Support Grants (LRSB) Closed scheme.

It was viewed that Government guidance could be interpreted that dog groomers fitted into 'Any business that is required to close the part of its business that provides its main service is eligible for a Closed Grant.' - as these businesses were only able to offer 'welfare' related services, it could be argued the bulk of their services were not able to be delivered.

On 26 February the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) released new FAQs which has clarified the position; confirming that because they were not mandated to close in the regulations animal grooming businesses 'are not eligible to receive grants under the LRSB (Closed) Addendum: 5 January onwards and Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment schemes.'

Government confirmed that because in the case of animal groomers it was 'materially unclear that these businesses were not mandated to close in the regulations' payments can be made up to and including Friday 26 February 2021.

As NCC had agreed to make these payments prior to the clarification from Government it will honour this commitment to those animal grooming businesses which had not yet been paid the grant by the 26 February deadline. This will be a one-off grant, paid under the ARG scheme, to the value of the LRSB businesses would have received through the main scheme, up to 31 March 2021.

Due to the clarification in Government policy animal groomers will not be eligible for any on-going payments through either LRSB or ARG, because it is now clear that they can operate their businesses, subject to Covid secure guidelines.