

Call for no more restrictions without talking to business first

SNP must consult with business owners over new restrictions

Jeremy Balfour MSP has criticised The Scottish Government for their lack of consultation and clarity when imposing tighter restrictions on businesses.

Mr Balfour's comments come after Scottish Conservative leader, Douglas Ross, gave a virtual 'Backing Business' speech calling on The Scottish Government to give businesses more notice before imposing new restrictions.

Douglas Ross proposed that a Covid Business Advisory Council be established to allow for consultation with business owners before decisions are made. He also called for a one week 'adaptation period' between announcing and introducing restrictions and for the creation of a Business Restrictions Grant, so no businesses are left waiting for support.

Along with echoing these calls, Mr Balfour has expressed his concern over the impact that local restrictions are having on businesses across Lothian.

The Scottish Conservative MSP for Lothian said: "These economically hard times are proving to be challenging for many businesses across Lothian, and the anxiety levels of business owners is particularly high during this period of local restrictions.

"The Scottish Government's inability to plan ahead and be

crystal clear whilst setting out the restrictions caused particular confusion and stress last week for owners of cafes with alcohol licenses across Lothian, who were led to believe they would have to temporarily close before clarity was given by the First Minister the following day.

“The approach that the SNP has chosen to take, where they spring new regulations on struggling businesses without prior warning and consultation, is not good enough and they must change their tactics.

“I am joining Douglas Ross in calling on the Scottish Government to create a Covid Business Advisory Council; to give a one week period between announcing and introducing restrictions; and to create a Business Restrictions Grant so that business owners feel supported and heard throughout this process.”