Wakefield Council, UK
Policy Alert: Corona – update 20th August

- ONS: Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society: 20 August 2020
  - Of businesses paused or currently trading, 10% said that their risk of insolvency was "moderate" and 1% said it was "severe".
  - Over half of currently trading businesses reported that their turnover had decreased below what is normally expected for this time of year.
  - 12% of the workforce remain on furlough leave, with 67% of furloughed employees receiving top ups to their pay.
  - The proportion of adults wearing a face covering at some point when leaving the home was at least 95% for the third consecutive week.
  - Between 7 and 14 August, the total volume of online job adverts decreased from 62% to 58% of its 2019 average, partially offsetting the large increase of the previous week.
  - Footfall across all retail locations continued to rise slightly in the latest week, with overall footfall at 68% of its level the same day a year ago, the highest since the week beginning 16 March 2020.
  - Prices in the overall high Demand Products (HDP) basket remained static, though the all food index increased by 0.3%, driven by an increase in dried pasta and kitchen rolls.
  - Road traffic across all motor vehicles has been gradually returning to pre-lockdown levels following a low point around the end of March.
  - Heavy goods vehicles were first to return to early February levels of traffic in early July, followed by light commercial vehicles. However, car road traffic remains around 10 percentage points lower compared with the first week of February.
  - Road traffic counts for large vehicles near major ports picked up to 90% of February 2020 levels, whereas average traffic counts across small vehicle types were 65% of the February 2020 level.

- ONS: Coronavirus and the social impacts on disabled people in Great Britain: July 2020
  https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsondisabledpeopleingreatbritain/july2020
  - 75% of disabled people reported they were "very worried" or "somewhat worried" about the effect that COVID-19 was having on their life (66% for non-disabled people); this is similar to May 2020 when nearly 74% of disabled people reported this.
  - Disabled people more often than non-disabled people indicated that the coronavirus affected their life in terms of: well-being (58% for disabled people, compared with 37% for non-disabled people), health (23% vs 7%), access to healthcare for non-coronavirus related issues (41% compared with 16%), access to groceries, medication and essentials (37% compared with 17%)
  - 24% were most concerned about the impact of coronavirus on their well-being (13% for non-disabled people); next most frequently, 13% reported being most concerned about access to healthcare and treatment (3% of non-disabled people).
25% of disabled people who were receiving medical care before the coronavirus pandemic indicated they were currently receiving treatment for only some of their conditions (compared with 7% of non-disabled people receiving care before the pandemic).

All well-being ratings of disabled people remain poorer in July 2020 compared with a similar period prior to the coronavirus pandemic; 45% of disabled people reported high anxiety in this period, a similar level to May 2020 (42%).

disabled people reported more frequently than non-disabled people that the coronavirus pandemic is affecting their well-being because it makes their mental health worse (46% vs 18% for non-disabled people), they are feeling lonely (42% and 29%), they spend too much time alone (36% vs 25%), they feel like a burden on others (25% vs 8%), or have no one to talk to about their worries (17% vs 10%).

Disabled people were more likely to report leaving their homes for medical needs or to provide care or help to a vulnerable person (19%) than non-disabled people (7%) but less likely to report leaving their home to eat or a drink at a restaurant, café, bar or pub (8% vs 14%), travel to work (21% vs 39%), or to take children to and from school (5% vs 11%).

37% reported they had not met up with other people to socialise this week, a higher proportion than reported by non-disabled people (29%).

9% indicated feeling very unsafe when outside their home because of the coronavirus pandemic, compared with 3% of non-disabled people.

**Institute for Employment Studies: Vacancy trends to week-ending 9 August 2020**


- New vacancy notifications have risen more than 50% during the month of July, with 169 thousand new vacancies notified w/e 2nd August.
- Overall level of vacancies at 9 August was 504,000, an increase of almost 40 per cent compared to last month, although vacancy levels remain nearly 400 thousand lower than at the same time last year.
- There are now 6.8 claimants for every vacancy. This has fallen from a peak of 7.9 in May 2020, as vacancies have recovered and the claimant count has stabilised.
- This remains well above its pre-crisis level of around 1.5 claimants per vacancy.
- The pattern of areas with the highest ratios remains consistent with previous months – ex-industrial areas (particularly in the north of England, central belt of Scotland and Welsh valleys) coastal towns, London and areas surrounding major cities.

**Financial Times: UK faces white-collar crisis as pandemic ends decades of job security**

https://www.ft.com/content/596e49d9-1283-47b3-a771-1c0beebd7df5

- Blue-collar workers tend to be hit hardest in a recession in contrast to better paid white-collar workers. After the 2008 financial crisis, the former suffered job losses of 5 to 10%, while managerial and other professional roles were little affected.
- While the impacts of Covid-19 initially fell on workers in retail and hospitality, increasingly management and office support teams are being hit hard.
- The three jobs that received the highest number of applications last month on the CV-library jobs website were junior white-collar roles. Trainee paralegal applications exceeded 4,200, with more than 3,000 applied for both HR assistant and trainee accountant jobs. The average number of applications for any vacancy before the coronavirus pandemic was 25.
- See vacancy/applications data below:
- **Carnegie UK Trust: Building Back for the Better: Propdictions and Recommendations**
  

  - Make National wellbeing the goal - Place national wellbeing at the centre of the medium-term recovery plan. Host a full public conversation on national wellbeing. Measure what matters now. Make transparent decisions that balance wellbeing outcomes.
  - Reset The relationship between citizens and the state - Set out an ambitious programme to transform government into an Enabling State. Invest in the hyperlocal.
  - The future can be local (as well as global) - Establish the principle of subsidiarity into law to revitalise local democracy. Encourage holistic, place-based approaches like community wealth building.
  - The relationship with work can be remodelled - Make a focus on fair work a central plank of the recovery. Tackle inequality in access to fair work.
  - Build a new level of financial resilience - Provide a new baseline of financial security for all citizens
  - Technology for all - Invest in digital inclusion. Commit to digital services of the highest quality. Regulate to tackle online harm.