



Mark Goldsmith  
Auckland Central Regional Commissioner  
Ministry of Social Development

5<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your time last week discussing with myself and other Auckland Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) the needs of businesses at this time. Collectively the BIDs at this meeting represented 9000 businesses in the Auckland region. Our specific feedback on what our businesses need now is as follows;

1. A Plan – What is the roadmap for the next few weeks and months? Not just getting Auckland out of this specific Level 3 situation with small alterations to levels, but overall in terms of opening the country, opening the border, and re-joining the rest of the world. Business needs as much certainty as possible both for planning, staffing, cashflow, stock ordering and significantly mental health. Businesses are still in limbo and the ongoing uncertainty is incredibly stressful and difficult. A future thorough roadmap is needed – signalling and vague indications are not sufficient. Many businesses are looking at closing, they are worn down, out of money and out of optimism. A clearer plan with specific details would assist at encouraging them to hang on and look to the future.
2. Business need ongoing financial support to remain viable. In previous lockdowns, business certainly suffered but many could draw on contingency, rainy day funds or redirecting funds. For the large majority, these options are now long gone. The rainy day has become a once in a 100 year storm. From today, Auckland will have been under Level 3 and 4 restrictions for 130 days and there is no indication that this will be ending anytime soon. This is simply unsustainable, even with the support payments that have been provided to date. This continuing support may be in the form of further Resurgence Support Payments, tax write offs, or other means but more financial assistance than is currently on the table is needed. For some businesses even funding PPE, EFTPOS charges and non negotiable business costs are proving challenging. We do not have hard numbers of business that are considering shutting up shop but for some BIDs there are more on this side of the equation than those intending to continue. Anecdotally, we all have businesses who we are personally concerned for.
3. Targeted financial support is also going to be needed in Level 2 in the form of resurgence support payments and wage subsidies. While some businesses may get a small 'bounce' on reducing level changes, many will not, and many simply can't sell or provide more services to make up for lost time in market. For example you don't need twice as many haircuts, you don't buy twice as much fuel etc. Hospitality also is significantly restricted at Level 2 and cannot trade near break even levels. Ensuring that the payments continue at Level 2 is also a matter of fairness across the country. Areas outside of Auckland have received this support at Level 2, because Auckland is in higher levels. It simply will be unfair to deny this to Auckland businesses and would be a double whammy with Auckland bearing the brunt of the impact in the first instance.

We appreciate you reaching out for information at this challenging time, and are also very keen to develop relationships and understand the role MSD can play in supporting our businesses both at this time and in the future.



Kind regards,



Megan Darrow

Ellerslie Town Centre Manager

On behalf of:

- Ellerslie Business Association
- Panmure Business Association
- Browns Bay Business Association
- Pukekohe Business Association
- Onehunga Business Association
- Business North Harbour
- One Mahurangi
- Waiuku Business and Development Association
- St Heliers Business Association
- Avondale Business Association
- Papakura Business Association
- Manukau Business Association