

We asked for Support Not Sympathy – the Government has given us crumbs

The Licensed Vintners Association (LVA) and the Vintners Federation of Ireland (VFI) has reacted to the Government announcement of a package for pubs this evening, saying "we asked for Support, Not Sympathy and the Government has given us crumbs".

Pubs that are still closed will receive the same level of restart grant as provided to businesses in Kildare, some of whom remained open. Kildare businesses received a 40% grant for four weeks closure but wet pubs, who will be kept closed for a minimum of six months, will receive the same 40% grant.

"This is paltry gesture which shows how little regard this Government has for the troubles of the pub industry," said Donall O'Keefe, Chief Executive of the LVA. "We asked for Support Not Sympathy and the Government has given us crumbs. This is the third time the reopening of the pubs has been delayed and they have had weeks to put a package together. We had been calling for a plan to support the pub sector since mid-July and this is all the Government managed to put together. It is disappointing in the extreme," he said.

Padraig Cribben, CEO of VFI stated, "This so-called support package for publicans who are closed almost six months is woefully inadequate. Our members are facing into an autumn of uncertainty with no guidance from Government about how and when they will be allowed reopen. In the circumstances, a weekly grant payment was the absolute minimum publicans expected. Publicans are now in complete despair. They can't see any light at the end of the tunnel and these supports will do nothing to ease their fears for the future. The Government is allowing thousands of pubs wither on the vine and the damage being done to local communities across the country is incalculable," he concluded.