



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

15<sup>th</sup> June 2020

*Dear Confront,*

**RE: CORONAVIRUS - SUPPORT FOR THE EVENTS AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY.**

Thank you for contacting me recently about support for the events and hospitality industry during the Coronavirus emergency; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

Coronavirus is the biggest challenge the UK has faced in decades – and we are not alone. All over the world we are seeing the devastating impact of this disease.

That's why the Government has put in place strict social distancing – to slow the spread of the virus so the NHS would not be overwhelmed, and lives could be saved. And thanks to the hard work and sacrifice of the British people, and despite a tragic loss of life, the UK slowed the spread of Coronavirus. Our health system was not overwhelmed – with spare beds, ventilators and hospital capacity at all times.

But we must begin to recover, and eventually restore, our way of life. The Government's objective is to return to our way of life as soon as possible – focusing on not just saving lives, but also on livelihoods. However, it is absolutely vital that as we do so, we avoid the risk of a second peak that overwhelms the NHS, and importantly doesn't waste the huge sacrifices the British people have made in 'lockdown' to get the virus under control.

The Prime Minister has also now unveiled a COVID-19 recovery strategy, which includes steps we can take over the coming weeks and months, if it is safe to do so, to slowly and cautiously lift 'lockdown' measures and get our country moving again. The third step in that plan, by July at the earliest, and conditional on the virus being sufficiently under control, is to re-open some businesses within the hospitality industry.

This is, of course, dependent on the rate of infection of the virus coming down, which means people must continue to play their part by following the rules. If we relax measures too soon, or if people fail to follow the rules, the Government will have no choice but to impose 'lockdown' again and we will be back at square one.

So as we begin to recover and return to our way of life, it is vital that we all stay alert, so we can control the virus and save lives.

In the meantime, the Government has taken unprecedented action to support businesses, jobs and our economy. The Small Business Grant Fund has been designed to help the smallest businesses, while the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund is intended to help small businesses operating within these sectors. All businesses in these sectors are also exempt from Business Rates for 12 months – that's every single shop, pub, theatre, music venue, restaurant, and any other business in the retail, hospitality or leisure sectors.



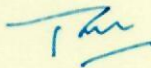


Businesses that are not eligible for the existing grants schemes should be able to benefit from other measures in the Government's generous support package which are intended to support all businesses under strain at this time, regardless of sector:

- An option to defer VAT payments by up to three months;
- The Bounce Back Loan Scheme, which will ensure that small and micro businesses can quickly access loans of up to £50,000 which are 100% guaranteed by the Government;
- The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, now extended to cover all businesses, including those which would be able to access commercial credit;
- The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme, for those businesses with a turnover of over £45 million;
- The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, to support businesses with their wage bills;
- The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, to support the self-employed.

You can use the Government's business support finder tool to see what support your business may be eligible for, and details on all of the schemes available at [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus). I have also relayed to Ministers the various points you have raised in your email, during my discussions with them.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*  


**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**