

Written evidence submitted anonymously

To what extent do Government measures protect viable jobs in the future and reduce the risk of long-term unemployment?

They significantly impair the survival of small, limited companies, which provide millions of jobs. The failure to support the Directors of these companies themselves, ultimately risks business closures. Freelancers, responsible for generating their own income, appear to have been targeted for extinction, posing significant risk to certain employment sectors. I work as a specialist in the Corporate Events sector, an £18bn+ industry, on a global basis. The heavy impact of Coronavirus on this sector, combined with the prevalent absence of Government financial support for those working within it, leaves it vulnerable to losing the very individuals and skillsets it needs to recover.

To what extent are Government measures value for money for the taxpayer?

I've had 0% return on my tax, whilst individuals either below the tax threshold or yet to pay tax, have been fully supported (which is entirely appropriate, however it means my taxes are being used to sustain others whilst support is specifically denied to me). Support is inappropriately targeted with a heavy bias towards employed versus self-employed, when realistically, individual tax contributions are fairly evenly distributed.

How effective is the Government support to businesses and individuals across different regions and sectors? Does the effectiveness of the Government support vary across different regions?

There is a distinct lack of parity between sectors, and measures such as Local Council Discretionary Grants were an absolute postcode lottery.

What lessons can be learnt from the different approaches undertaken by the nations in the UK to combatting the coronavirus?

England needs to be more like the other nations

What impact will a second lockdown have on the economy? How should the Government best support the economy if intermittent lockdowns become a feature over the next year?

Both infection rates regionally, and businesses in various sectors, had not even begun to recover from the 1st lockdown before regional restrictions were imposed. Many businesses had been required to make significant investment in Covid-19-proofing to facilitate their businesses re-opening,

only to have regional restrictions close them down once again. The 2nd lockdown poses a significant risk to businesses.

What changes to the economy are now permanent?

The damage being inflicted. If Rishi Sunak has his way, there will no longer be such a thing as entrepreneurialism or self-employment. Employment opportunities are severely reduced. Entire sectors that were thriving pre-Covid, have been pre-emptively determined 'unviable', whilst money has been thrown – without strategic benefit – at other sectors. The nature of working may also be permanent.

- What difference will the discovery of a vaccine and/or treatment make?

There will be huge social impact, and leisure industries will hopefully see a confident return to businesses (assuming people still have the money to use them). In economic terms, businesses have already been forced into adapting working methods where the virus is present, however it would enable those sectors most challenged – the arts and live events – to resume more favourable working practices.

- Will behavioural changes such as working from home necessitate structural changes, whether or not a vaccine is discovered?

The move to home-based working appears advantageous, allowing workers to save on commuting times (which has positive benefits for the environment) and costs of travel, as well as on-costs of being in an office (e.g. lunches, clothing etc). It can also save businesses huge costs on premises, potentially company cars etc. It also removes geographic barriers, allowing greater flexibility for meetings, as they now take place online via Zoom, Teams, etc. It would therefore appear advantageous to retain this working model, however there is a clear B2B implication and also a mental health implication down-the-line. My husband has been home-based since 2003 and it actually has many disadvantages, being quite isolating and intruding into the home.

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