

Supplementary written evidence submitted by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Dear Julian,

I was delighted to appear in front of the Select Committee on Wednesday 24 March to discuss the future of UK music festivals. Festivals are a vital part of the British cultural landscape, with the festival sector bringing cultural and economic activity across the UK. We understand that this is an uncertain time for the sector and have provided support through economic wide and sector specific support packages. As part of my discussion with the Committee, I agreed to write back to you on the following:

1. Since the activities in the Events Research Programme pilots will take place before they are legally allowed, will new regulations be needed to allow them to take place?

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021 (Part 4, paragraph 9) provides a power by direction for the Secretary of State for Health and the Secretary of State for Culture to disapply any relevant restriction or requirement contained in the wider regulations, in relation to specified premises, events or gatherings. In making that direction, the Secretaries of State must consult the Chief Medical Officer and Deputy Chief Medical Officer.

2. Who is funding the Events Research Programme?

We know that there is an appetite to reopen cultural, business and sporting events and are confident that event organisers are ready to work with us to run these pilots. The costs of staging the pilot events will be shared between the event organisers and Government. Work is underway to confirm exactly how these will be managed.

3. Events Research Programme: List of pilots and terms of reference

The pilot programme will test events across England, including London, Sheffield, and Liverpool. So far, the Government has confirmed confirmed the first phase of pilots will include:

- FA Cup Semi Final, Wembley Stadium (18 April)
- World Snooker Championship, Sheffield Crucible Theatre (17 April - 3 May)
- Luna Cinema, Liverpool (23-25 April)
- Carabao Cup Final (25 April)
- ACC Business Event, Liverpool (28 April)
- Circus Nightclub, Liverpool (30 April - 1 May)
- Sefton Park Pilot (outdoor music event, 2 May)
- The Brits (indoor music/TV awards event, 11 May)
- FA Cup Final, Wembley Stadium (15 May).

All events will be subject to national and local approvals. Further events may be announced in due course.

The Events Research Programme pilots will be run across a range of settings, venue types, and activity types so that the research findings can inform policy thinking on the reopening of similar settings across multiple sectors. Each venue participating in the programme will test specific settings to collect evidence, and inform best practice; the World Snooker Championships, for example, will test a theatre setting. The evidence gathered will then be shared across the event economy, so that venues can prepare to accommodate larger audiences. The terms of reference for the Events Research Programme are detailed in Annex A.

4. Contracts with Trivandi

A contract has been made via direct award to events management company Trivandi, to support DCMS and the pilot organisations in delivering the programme. Trivandi specialise in the delivery and operation of major events and venues, and were selected based on their experience and technical capability in this area.

With best wishes,

Caroline Dinenage MP
Minister of State for Digital and Culture

27 April 2021