

**Written evidence submitted by David Cox (Chairman at Design Construct & Exhibitions Group Ltd)**

Once the Government announced that all social gatherings were to be stopped this then closed my business down. As an events and exhibition company all our work that we had in the pipeline up to and including August 2020 got cancelled or postponed.

We had 3 Million pounds worth of orders which then went to Zero overnight

We employ 30 staff who we had no choice but to use the Furlough scheme in order to try and protect jobs.

Our business requires many elements to be working in order for us to start back up. We require Flights, hotels, restaurants, exhibition venues and the approval to allow people to travel all to be back working as without this we will not have a business to restart.

The furlough scheme has been welcome, as well as the CIBIL scheme, however we are still waiting to see if we can get any finance through CIBILS as this seems to take banks far to long to sort out. Our business could well miss out on this due to the fact that we may not have the required security or lending criteria in order to get such a loan. However as we had plenty of orders we were not in the need for any loans, If we take the loan then this will put extra pressure on our business as we will need to factor in the repayment costs and therefore I believe it will put our business back at least 3 years.

I believe that Insurance companies should be made to pay out on business interruption even if they were not to pay 100% of the claim, 50% would see many more businesses survive as they would not need to take out loans which will be detrimental to many, alternatively they could wipe out any CIBILS loan that any company has had to take out.

We will try our best to keep all our staff at the level we have now but unless events begin again or there is further financial support then this is not a given.

As events look like they may be one of the last industries to get going then I believe that the furlough scheme will have to be continued to be rolled over for certain industries.

I do have empathy for the government and the Chancellor as I believe they have done great things in trying to support industries in a very difficult time. The future looks like it will be a tough time for all as many businesses will at least this year if not next as well post losses which will result in lower tax revenue for the treasury but also unemployment is likely to increase which will be a further burden to the government, as well as failed businesses that may never come back.

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