

Written evidence submitted by Premier UK Events Ltd

On the 17th March the Chancellor said in the house of commons that “event hire” companies did fall under the umbrella of “leisure and hospitality”. The guidance subsequently sent to local councils however relating to the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grant does not specifically mention event companies however and as such these companies are not able to benefit from the support promised.

The chancellor has subsequently confirmed in the house of commons that “exhibition companies” also fell under this umbrella, the guidance again makes no mention of them.

As you can imagine the events industry has been hit harder than most during both the lockdown period, now and also in the future. Live events require hotels and conference centres to be open for conferences to take place. They need exhibition centres such as NEC, SEC and Excel to be open for exhibitions to take place and ultimately, they need people to be able to meet in groups of more than 6 people...

Event companies across the country are being told by their local councils that they are not eligible for the RHL Grant or the business rates cuts that feature as part of the scheme. They need this support more than the majority of companies that have received it and who have been able to trade during this period.

At present there has been no guidance on when live events such as weddings, conferences, exhibitions and festivals can resume. The events industry was promised help and has not received it.

To compound this, the vast majority of event companies are ran as ltd companies with the directors taking the majority of their payments as dividends. With no support for people in this category event company owners are having to use their savings to pay mortgages.

The Chancellor has specifically promised our industry the support it needs, we feel that its only right that he follows this up with action which will help save the events industry. The same industry that built the Nightingale hospitals in record breaking time for the government when it needed them...

Regards

Ben McCarthy
(Managing Director)

June 2020

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Rishi Sunak

I believe our approach represents a sensible, coherent, co-ordinated and comprehensive way to tackle the problem. We have a range of targeted measures, each of which will make a significant difference to those on the ground, but as I said, we stand ready to do more and are indeed actively doing extra things.

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Greg Smith (Buckingham) (Con)

I warmly welcome the enormous package of measures outlined by the Chancellor. This morning, I spoke to Energy Generator Hire in Kimble Wick in my constituency, which has lost most of its order book and is uncertain about the future. Can he confirm whether event hire companies are included in the envelope of leisure and hospitality?

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Rishi Sunak

Those that have business properties will be eligible both for the relief and the grant, which will cover a significant number of events companies that have premises. Obviously, if they do not have premises, they will not qualify for business rates relief, but should be eligible for some of the other measures that I have outlined today.

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Helen Hayes (Dulwich and West Norwood) (Lab)

The failure of the Chancellor to mention private renters in his statement was a grave error, because many of those private renters are the same precarious workers in hospitality, the arts and culture

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