

Written evidence submitted by S&H Technical Support Ltd

S&H Technical Support Ltd are based in North Devon. We employ 21 staff + various freelancers. We have been in business nearly 30 yrs renting equipment to TV, Theatre, Parties, Hotels, Corporate meetings & Presentations, fun days, meetings & incentives, Stadium Concerts & various hospitality events.

Although head office in Devon, we have a place in Brent & work on shows like Celebrity Juice, Olympics, C I Need, Strictly Come Dancing, Crufts, Eurovisions & numerous Awards shows.

Despite some similar Companies around UK getting the original grant, like many I have had nothing. Both North Devon & Brent say NO, despite numerous appeals and say don't qualify. I say we are in hospitality, NO. We are same as a tool hire Co, NO.

I pointed out at every stage that the Chancellor said Event hire companies are included and sent them Hansard scripts & videos of him saying it in Parliament.

I missed out on Self employed as have other business interests, Being a Ltd Co my Paye is £680 month, so I get 80% of that on Furlough. All my staff are now on Furlough as on 4th Month with £0 income, from £100,000 month. We might not start up until 2021. How can I survive my overheads without wages are still £15-25,000 month.

I pointed out to the Councils the Govt guidance says you can judge on all merits as its not set in stone. North Devon Council only paid out £39 Million from £51 million of the original grants money. £12 million from 1 council sitting in a bank, rather than saving jobs. Instead of paying out they are going to let so many go bust. I said if I go bust will cost taxpayer £300,000 in redundancy and £500,000 in lost tax,vat,paye, etc in the following 12 months. £25,000 may of kept me going until work comes in again but they don't care.

The Govt announced a discretionary loan but most wont qualify. Brent has £3.3mil for 9000 businesses. I don't think £366 each will stop many going bust.

Our Industry is worth £Billions to UK economy, we create the concerts, events, parties, gigs that make life fun but we are being slowly strangled to death. Once we stop breathing there will not be any resuscitating going on.

Clearly these are unprecedented and difficult times, and we appreciate the landscape is changing rapidly. However, if we do not get some financial support from the Government we will not exist.

The value of the sectors is huge to the UK economy; please see below a summary of official data collected nationally to support this.

The sectors live events, Events, Entertainment technology, Leisure, Performing Arts and TV & Film sectors are worth more than £100bn to the annual economy as evidenced in DCMS figures and was the fastest growing sector in the UK.

The British Visits and Events Partnership (BVEP) report² states overall events support half of the UK's visitor economy with a total £70bn direct spend. UK entertainment technology industry that supplies events and entertainment and includes; manufacturers, distributors, rental & production, professional services, events companies like ours, is valued at £1.36bn in 2018/2019, according to PLASA Industry Research 2019³. The Live Music sector made a contribution of £1.1 billion (GVA) in

2018, according to UK Music's latest Music by Numbers report⁴. Overall, according to a study by Bournemouth University⁵ last year, the outdoor event industry alone contributed £30.4bn (GVA), employing just under 600,000 people. A recent survey outlined by SOLT and UK Theatre⁶ states the total loss of income is estimated at £630 million to the theatre sector from a 12-week closure. A current report into prospects for the events supply chain, carried out for the Events Industry Forum and Business Visits and Events Partnership, shows that 60% of companies in the sector have 3 months or less liquidity and that companies would survive for a further one or two months if they were to receive business rates discounts afforded to the rest of the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors.

My company needs the Government to review immediately financial support for our industry, and proposals for the longer term, as we work in a sector that will not start to see income generation until 2021. That is a fact that will not change following the lockdown.

Imagine how our industry feels. We see takeaway shops telling us they have their grants & are the busiest they have been. Supermarkets enjoying £millions of rate relief & they too are the busiest.

Our industry is 100% down, no work and soon no money with many months before we can start again.

Terry Murtha