



House of Commons
London, SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Oliver Dowden MP
Secretary of State for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
100 Parliament Street
London SW1A 2BQ

22nd February 2021

Dear Oliver

GUIDANCE AND RECOVERY FOR THE EVENTS SECTOR

I am writing on behalf of the APPG for Events. We urge the Government to provide clarity on the conditions that will enable events to operate again. Given long lead times for setting up events, conferences, festival and exhibitions, advance notice is needed to enable planning and booking. It is likely to take three months or more after a go date is given for the events industry to start up again – it is much harder to get events up and running than it is to open restaurants and pubs, who can generate income as soon as they are allowed to open their doors again.

A risk assessed approach to reopening would be more beneficial than a sector by sector method. This would mean the Government sets out what operating conditions are to be in place for safe events. Events settings can be better managed and controlled than many other sectors which might be allowed to open sooner, for example, non-essential retail and cinemas. The APPG has been discussing these matters with Public Health England and they seem to appreciate this.

You will be aware of the vital importance we place on securing Government support for pandemic insurance for the events sector and we have raised this with the Chancellor. A copy of the APPG's most recent letter is attached.

A Government-led campaign of confidence to promote the fact that we are 'Open for Business' would alleviate the significant competition that the UK will face post pandemic to host major business events and would also increase in our use of soft power support internationally.

After the success of the vaccination programme, we have an opportunity to increase the number of major international events coming to the UK, as organisers look for 'safe haven' destinations. I hope that the Government's decision to press ahead with the G7 & COP 26 summits will signal that the festivals, events and conference industry can re-open soon and boost wellbeing and optimism after the long Covid crisis.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP, Chair of the
APPG for Events