

APP Jazz Appreciation Group



HOUSE OF COMMONS, LONDON, SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Caroline Dinenage MP
Minister of State for Digital and Culture
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
4th Floor
100 Parliament Street
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17th January 2010

Dear Caroline

Your Ref: MC2020/21493/SR

Thank you for your letter of the 14th December 2020 in reply to my letter of the 5th October 2020. Regrettably your letter does not address the problems of musicians and small scale promoters who have fallen through the cracks for one reason or another.

I have been writing to you about the plight of self-employed musicians who have lost their income during the Covid pandemic and who have not been eligible to recoup any part of that income under the Government support schemes. When the Covid restrictions are finally lifted, these musicians will be further penalised by the Government's failure to secure visa-free tours to EU countries: an arrangement considered 'standard' in any trade deal with the EU, thus making our musicians more expensive than EU musicians.

The survival of our music industry is under threat, with a consequent loss to the Government of £2.9 billion income to the UK.

Of the twelve paragraphs in your letter of the 14th December letter, regrettably only the eighth paragraph, and only then briefly refers to one of the issues I have asked you to address. I therefore refer you again to the numbered paragraphs in my letter dated 5th October and to the paper attached to your letter of 11 August which for ease of reference I have set out below and attached..

II. We would therefore put to you the following observations and recommendations to ensure together we can achieve the best outcome from this initiative, and protect and preserve all we can.

III. Ensure that the emergency fund is for (a) all organisations, large and small, and not just for organisations of "international or national cultural significance" and (b) that funds are available for self-employed musicians who are currently falling between the cracks.

IV. In terms of transparency provide a safeguard that possible conflicts of interest between the Arts Council and clients from their National Portfolio Organisation and non Arts Council funded organisations are mitigated.

V. It would appropriate if the membership of the Culture Recovery Board is broadened with the addition of Independent Board Members with concrete experience of the "volunteer" constituency in the arts such as a volunteer promoter, musician or similar.

VI. A "snap" audit of those individuals and organisations who have received funds plus the title of the emergency funding scheme that provided the funds would be helpful. This audit is crucial in order to identify those people and organisations that are falling between the cracks.

VII. Find a mechanism to ensure the ministerial task forces are joined up.

VIII. With regard to the Government's 'levelling up' agenda and preventing the reversal of decades of progress in cultural provision, diversity and inclusion, it would be sensible if this agenda was reflected in the Entertainments and Events Working Group so that (a) there is a better balance of organisations between London and the regions and (b) the Group is more representative of diverse

communities.

IX. As part of the Governments "levelling up agenda" there is a reformation of arts funding in England with an organisation that can deliver a rolling, realistic and coherent national plan for the arts, entertainment and culture where under-represented musics and art forms finally get a place in the sun.

X. The reduction of VAT to 5% for the performing arts and entertainment is to be welcomed. A retention of this rate in the long term would be of enormous benefit to the arts and entertainment sector.

We would be grateful for a reply that addresses the points we have raised. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



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John Spellar MP (Co Chair) Lord Mann (Co Chair)

Please reply to:

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c/o

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Secretariat

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