



All Party Parliamentary Jazz Appreciation Group briefing paper for the debate on Covid-19 and the Cultural and Entertainment Sectors on Tuesday 2 March 2021.

*“Everyone’s running on empty, but the will and passion to survive are still there; the means to achieve it has to be the goal. This cannot be done without a national strategy, fairly framed and guided by experienced professionals whose advice would be ignored with dire and irretrievable consequences”*¹
Stuart Johnson, music programme assistant at Zeffirelli’s Ambleside

1 Where are we now?

Covid-19 has had a devastating effect on the cultural economy. In 2019 arts and culture contributed £10.47 billion to the UK economy² of which the UK music industry contributed £5.8 billion³ The Night Time Industries Association estimate that the night time economy (nightclubs, pubs, bars, and live music venues) contributes £66 billion to the UK economy.

The effect of Covid -19 has decimated the cultural economy. The arts and entertainment sector saw a 60% decline in output during 2020⁴ and the night-time economy by the second half of 2020 was trading at 28% of their annualised pre Covid-19 turnover – a decline of 72%.⁵

In September 2020 the Musicians’ Union (MU) survey of its members reported:

- A third of musicians are considering abandoning the industry completely, due to financial hardship caused by the corona virus pandemic.
- 47% of our members have already been forced to seek work outside of the industry, 70% of MU members unable to undertake more than a quarter of their usual work.
- With furlough schemes coming to an end, 87% of musicians who were covered by the schemes say they will be facing financial hardship.
- A third (33%) didn’t even qualify for any of the support available.
- 88% believe the Government has not done enough to support musicians during the pandemic.⁶

Swathes of individuals and volunteer organisations crucial to a healthy music scene have not qualified for available Government or other support. Bands and musicians do not suddenly arrive at the O2 Arena there is an infrastructure that assiduously works to get them there and if that infrastructure is left to flounder through a lack of support and investment, the UK will lose its competitive edge, in terms of music development, music exports and “soft power”.⁷

Other far reaching impacts will be on the supply of musicians coming into the music business from music colleges, conservatoires, through self help and DIY routes.⁸ There will be no where for them to go; employment opportunities will have disappeared.

“.....the devastating impact on the live music ecosystem would mean that some artists, promoters, venues, and festivals who fall away at this time may never return to the industry – which was previously a great British success story”.⁹

2 Where do we want to be?

¹ Stuart Johnson, music programme assistant at Zeffirelli’s Ambleside 27th February 2021

² House of Commons Library *Briefing Paper Number CBP 9018*. John Woodhouse and Georgina Hutton 25th February 2021.
<https://www.ukmusic.org/research-reports/music-by-numbers-2020/>

⁴ Ibid 2

⁵ *Covid-19 and UK Nightlife – An inquiry by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Night Time Economy* February 2021
<https://www.ntia.co.uk/appg/>

⁶ <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/all-news-and-features/coronavirus-presses-mute-button-on-music-industry>

⁷ <https://appjag.org/2020/09/08/jazz-musicians-and-volunteer-promoters-falling-between-the-cracks/>

⁸ *Cold Comfort and Home Truths*. Chris Hodgkins. 2019. P18

⁹ Live music, Industry, Venues & Entertainment. *UK live music: At a cliff edge*. Carey & Chambers. October 2020. P5

On the 30th June the Prime Minister set out the Government's "New Deal" to rebuild Britain across the UK, putting jobs, skills and infrastructure investment at the heart of their economic recovery post-corona virus, and delivering on their manifesto pledges to level up the entire country¹⁰

"But this moment also gives us a much greater chance to be radical and to do things differently. To build back better. To build back bolderdouble down on levelling upbuilding people up, giving everyone growing up in this country the opportunity they need, whoever you are, whatever your ethnicity, whatever your background..... The theatres, the arts, the salons, the gyms, the cricket clubs, sectors in which we lead the world and yet which suffer because they depend on the very physical proximity and contact that COVID makes so difficult. And I say to all of you, everybody in those sectors we will get you going as fast as we possibly can.

To achieve this agenda it is essential that a **National Arts And Culture Action Plan is developed**, a plan that brings all the components of the arts and culture together from pubs to cinemas, from opera houses to folk and jazz clubs, from grass roots venues to concert halls and arenas, theatres to art galleries, from museums to libraries. To make this happen a rolling, realistic and coherent **National Arts And Culture Action Plan** for the arts, entertainment and culture needs to be speedily formulated and delivered. Crucial to the formulation and deliver is that the DCMS listens to all the voices in the arts and cultural economy – the great and as importantly, the small.

Vital components of the **National Arts And Culture Action Plan** should include:

- *"A date for full capacity restarts.*
- *A Government-backed reinsurance scheme.*
- *Targeted financial support.*
- *Extension to the VAT rate reduction on tickets.*
- *Rollover of the paid 2020 Local Authority license fees*
- *Extension to business rates relief¹¹*
- *"Extend the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) and furlough beyond April for sectors that cannot return to work*
- *Adjust SEISS to ensure that all musicians are covered in future rounds of funding*
- *Open up the second round of the Cultural Recovery Fund (CRF) to freelancers in England – in line with Scotland and Wales*
- *Introduce an insurance scheme for summer festivals and other events*
- *A subsidy for live events to happen with reduced capacity under social distancing¹²*

Chris Hodgkins
28th February 2021

¹⁰ <https://www.conservatives.com/news/boris-johnson-unveils-a-new-deal-for-britain>

¹¹ UK Music. Let The Music Play: Save Our Summer. January 2021 p7

¹² The Musicians' Union call to the Government to invest in musicians. <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/campaigns/invest-in-musicians>