

18th March 2020

Sir Robert Syms
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA



Dear Sir Robert

I know that at this difficult time you are being inundated with requests for support from all sectors of industry. As Chair of the of the Destination Management Board that represents the Tourism industry across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole I appreciate the Government's commitment to try and support business through the financial packages put in place so far.

As I am sure you are aware the Hospitality and Tourism industries are the third largest employers in the UK. The industry is worth £130 billion nationally, bigger than the automotive and pharmaceutical industries combined. In Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole it is worth over £1 billion and directly employs in excess of 17,000 people. That is on top of the secondary services that rely on the tourism industry, from delivery drivers to architects, and plumbers to accountants.

Following our Board meeting yesterday it was very apparent that the key area of concern is staffing and salaries and it is clear that many businesses have only weeks before they will have to close. This crisis couldn't have come at a worse time for the Hospitality and Tourism industry. Most businesses rely on Easter and Summer trading to carry them through their leanest period and were looking forward to the coming season to bring them back into a positive financial situation.

Staff are already being laid off, and whilst we do appreciate financial support through the business rates relief and potential loans and grants it is the people who work in the industry that we have to support. Those people who lose their jobs will go on to have to claim benefits, money which will be unrecoverable by the Government. If that money were to be made available to businesses to pay their staff, it would mean that the industry can retain the skills that will be needed to spearhead the economic recovery and reduce the number of businesses that cease to trade.

I urge you to lobby appropriate ministers to consider our proposal and to support your local hospitality and Tourism industry who need financial support now as the lifeblood of the area.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David J. Bailey'.

David Bailey
Chair - Destination Management Board
Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole

Sent via email