

The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

07 May 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

Collectively, we represent many sectors and businesses that employ millions of people across London, from small employers and start-ups to large multinationals: we all champion the role our great city plays in this country and in the world.

We have been strongly supportive of the bold measures the Government has put in place to protect jobs and industries in the wake of COVID-19. However, to support the capital's recovery, we have pooled our thinking to identify the next set of actions needed to support the city as it "unlocks" and beyond.

As the process of unlocking will inevitably be gradual, it is vital that the furlough scheme continues to support those sectors where the pace of return will have to be slowest, particularly the leisure, hospitality, and retail sectors. Making the scheme more flexible to support part-time working is also critical.

Secondly, there must be crystal-clear advice on who should go back to work and when, based on the feedback from firms across the economy. This is particularly important for London's economy, given its reliance on public transport. As the necessary social distancing measures remain in place, capacity will be much reduced. To ensure that the travelling public has confidence in the safety of the network and to minimise the risk of overcrowding, particularly at historic daily peak times, absolute clarity and consistency of message between central government, London government, and Transport for London is essential.

Confidence must be inspired more broadly. London and Partners is planning a coordinated consumer confidence campaign in London, which the Government should financially support.

As people seek to resume a degree of normality, the Government must give clear guidance to local authorities on the planning and licencing rules that must be temporarily changed to enable the reopening of leisure, retail, and hospitality. The hotel sector in London is reliant on international travel and tourism and will take time to recover. As they reopen, the Government will need to ensure that these sectors have access to whatever PPE is deemed necessary.

One of London's distinctive strengths is its creative and cultural industry. These businesses and their staff – who are often self-employed – have faced particular difficulties in accessing



government support. Continued business rates relief, easier access finance, and a distress fund for urgent support are all critical for the sector's survival. As we look further ahead, sustainability needs to be at the heart of recovery planning. The Government should work with business to explore the attachment of green strings to future support, to make clear the UK's future commitment as an international leader.

Last, but not least, your levelling-up agenda makes clear the importance of infrastructure for the economic future of the UK. A positive step at these uncertain times would be to publish the National Infrastructure Strategy, which would give certainty to industry and attract private investment.

We started these conversations in the shared desire to support the country's economic recovery in the wake of COVID-19. We look forward to working with you and your team as we explore these areas and how we can support businesses in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Jasmine Whitbread
Chief Executive, London First

Michael Lassman
London Chair, FSB London

Catherine McGuinness
Policy Chair, City of London Corporation

William Russell
Lord Mayor of the City of London

Richard Burge
Chief Executive, London Chamber of
Commerce

Caroline Norbury
Chief Executive, Creative Industries
Federation

Kate Nicholls
Chief Executive, UK Hospitality

David Stringer-Lamarre
Chairman, Institute of Directors (London
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