

08.02.21

CONFIDENTIAL SUBMISSION - in respect to the events industry Covid 19 Support by Government.

Businesses exclusively working within the events industry have been effectively closed since March 2020 and will remain unable to return to reasonable levels of work (and income) until social distancing restrictions are lifted (likely to be no earlier than end of summer 2021). The industry will then have a long period of re-building the businesses back up (running an events business is not like opening a shop door and allowing the customers to walk in again)

The reason why the events businesses are unable to operate is entirely down to the government restrictions placed on our business sector and core business. While the restrictions are totally understandable, the effective closure of these businesses and the financial stress that the businesses are suffering is not caused by any sort of failure of the businesses but entirely as a result of the government measures. In July during a meeting with ministers and subsequent meetings Government has promised a package of support for the industry but took until January 2021 to announce a package, which is unfit for purpose and has ridiculous qualifying criteria. Almost all businesses are unable to apply for the scheme due to the criteria.

The packages of support aimed more for other sectors and the recent packages of support announced do not have any of the same qualifying criteria and demands on business. The VAES has been called by government and ministers 'a last line of support' and that public money shouldn't be used to support private businesses. It would appear that the Events industry is being Marginalised and that the extremely specific qualifying criteria is discriminatory when compared to the more simple qualifying criteria required by other industries and sectors.

While I believe that we have had a significant amount of support from some ministers, I believe that there are some ministers and Government officers who have been opposed to financial support for the industry and this has caused the industry to not receive direct, appropriate and accessible financial support. I believe that the VAES scheme is essentially not fit for purpose and that the officers who designed this scheme had not educated themselves on the specific needs of the industry, or how the industry works, or how the industry is critical to the public, to tourism, education, business, GoJ, SoJ and directly support every single industry and sector of Jersey life.

I have been involved directly in the requests for support to government and all industry specific group discussions, meetings and so on.

I would be more than happy to discuss the position of the Jersey events industry or my own business further with you if you wish.