



Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

17 December 2021

Dear Chancellor,

As the Omicron variant of Covid-19 takes hold in the UK and people begin to prioritise social interactions the coach sector is once again facing an incredibly difficult period.

Coaches play a vital role in moving people from A to B. Millions of visits are made each year by coach to attractions and places across the UK contributing £14bn to the UK tourism economy in 2019. They also play a vital role in getting 600,000 children to school safely and providing other essential services, including one million rail replacement journeys

Operators saw demand for tourism collapse during 2020 and for much of 2021 but had slowly begun to return as customer confidence grew, but over recent days this confidence has been dented and operators have been hit by mass cancellations.

My members are reporting that, at what is traditionally a busy time of year in advance of a quieter winter period, they are seeing cancellations of on average 40%, with some operators seeing much higher levels. Operators are also reporting to us that they are seeing £10,000s of business being cancelled in the last few days alone. These levels of cancellation are not sustainable for a sector, which has been hard hit during the pandemic but was unjustifiably excluded from the support offered to the wider tourism and leisure sector.

I was heartened by your officials' comments that the Treasury would look to ensure that the £250 million of grant funding, which it believes has not yet been handed out by local authorities, is given to businesses that need it. This unquestionably must include coach operators and could be resolved by making it explicit in guidance to local authorities that coach operators are eligible.

This approach would provide the industry with breathing space until the return of business in what will hopefully be a few weeks' time and ensure that the industry can gear up quickly to help the economy recover by getting people to places and attractions across the UK.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graham Vidler'.

Graham Vidler
Chief Executive

cc Baroness Vere, Nigel Huddleston MP

Confederation of Passenger Transport UK

Fifth Floor (South) Chancery House 53-64 Chancery Lane London WC2A 1QS Tel: 020 7240 3131
Mobile: 07384 892507 email: graham.vidler@cpt-uk.org website: www.cpt-uk.org