

20 November 2020

Rt Hon Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London
City Hall
The Queens Walk
London
SE1 2AA

Dear Mayor,

Keeping London Globally Competitive through Tourism

We are writing you this letter on behalf of the business community in central London to emphasise the importance that London & Partners and tourism will play in London and the UK's economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss any points further with you and your team.



As the country begins to look at measures to help the public finances, it will be important to **maintain and even increase funding for London**. As well as public transport and policing – vital to keep London moving and to keep London safe – 2021 will be a critical year for a **large-scale campaign to sell London domestically and internationally, as a world-class global destination**. This will be one of the quickest ways to get London firing on all cylinders and helping the national recovery. The value that London & Partners (the international trade, investment and promotion agency for London) has added since it was set up in 2011 is incontrovertible: 142 million people have been inspired through visitlondon.com, over 66,000 jobs have been created or supported, over 2000 overseas companies have been helped to set up or expand into London, and this has cumulatively added over £2.2bn to London's economy.







Yet London spends considerably less on promotion than other competitor global cities – Paris and Berlin spends more than double, Singapore spends over ten times as much – so if anything, we should be increasing what we do, and we should certainly **resist any cuts to this important part of London's budget**. A letter has also been written to Robert Jenrick in the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to raise this point, and we will continue to be vocal in making the case that London's recovery cannot be placed in jeopardy from a lack of funds.

We are sure you will be aware of the narrative currently in circulation that claims that London has received special treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Far from this being the case, the evidence on the ground proves that London has been **disproportionately badly hit**. There are huge economic and social benefits to be gained from getting London back to normal and doing what it does best. To do this it will be vital for all parties to work together, and we stand ready to offer any help I can give in this respect.

In conclusion, any decision to reduce funding to an organisation such as London & Partners that attracts companies to London, promotes London as an iconic destination and supports the London economy would be risky and counterintuitive. London needs to be prepared to act swiftly to maximise this reset moment, by not doing so we may suffer irreparable damage.

Yours sincerely,

 <p>Penny Alexander Chief Executive, Baker Street Quarter Partnership</p>	 <p>Lee Lyons Chief Operating Officer, Fitzrovia Partnership</p>
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 <p>Ros Morgan Chief Executive, Heart of London Business Alliance</p>	 <p>Kay Buxton Chief Executive, Marble Arch London</p>
 <p>Jace Tyrrell Chief Executive, New West End Company</p>	 <p>Kay Buxton Chief Executive, Marble Arch London</p>
 <p>Brian Bickell Chief Executive, Shaftesbury</p>	 <p>Nic Durston Chief Executive, South Bank BID</p>
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